

SIGHT AND SOUND

PRICE
SIXPENCE

SPRING 1936
VOL. 5 - No 17

TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE
(PARAMOUNT)

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE



16 mm. SOUND FILMS

Have your 35mm. Sound Films
Variable Area or Variable
Density, reduced to 16mm. by

**BTH OPTICAL
REDUCTION METHOD**

which gives the
BEST TONAL QUALITY

Information and Quotations from:

Sound Reproducer Sales:—

The British Thomson-Houston Co., Ltd.,
Crown House, Aldwych,
London, W.C.2

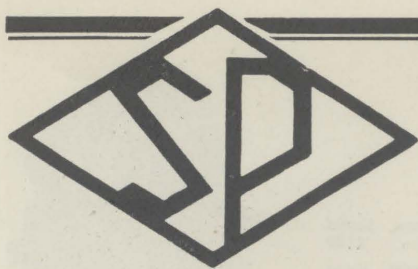
Telephone :—Temple Bar 8040

BTH

RUGBY

THE BRITISH THOMSON-HOUSTON COMPANY LIMITED, RUGBY, ENGLAND

A2072N



THE
STANDARD
OF
PERFECTION
IN
16-MM.
ALL-BRITISH
PORTABLE
(SOUND-ON-FILM)
TALKING
PICTURE
APPARATUS

WUNDATONE

16-mm. Portable (Sound-on-Film) Talking Picture

PROJECTORS are ideal for Educational purposes

The continuous success of the well-known 6-watt WUNDATONE 16-mm. Talking Picture apparatus for audiences up to 1,500 has resulted in the production of a 2½-watt model known as the "Home and Classroom" Portable Talking Picture Outfit, suitable for schools, clubs and the home, and for audiences of 150 people. Both models represent the last word in design, efficient performance and simplicity of operation, and combine extreme silence in running with utmost accessibility to all important mechanism and controls.

WUNDATONE projectors do not damage films.

6^{WATT} MODEL 110 Gns. 2½^{WATT} MODEL 90 Gns.

For audiences up to 1,500.

For audiences up to 150.

For literature and demonstrations, write:—

S. P. EQUIPMENTS LTD.
9, GOLDEN SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

Telephone :
GERRARD 3695, 3696

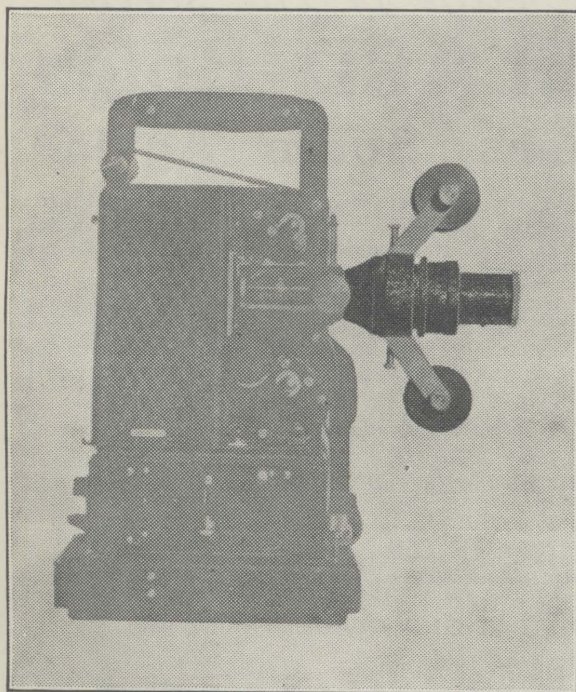
Telegrams :
DELIGHTED, Piccy, London

SOUTHERN AREA OFFICE :—20, GLOUCESTER PLACE, BRIGHTON.

The CINEPRO FILM SLIDE ADAPTOR

for the

SIEMENS STANDARD MODEL 16mm. PROJECTOR



With this accessory your present heavy glass slides and lantern are no longer required. The subject matter is placed on FILM. The Siemens projector is particularly suitable for such work—reel arms fold back, and if still more light is required just remove the shutter and you will have all the light you want. Horizontal or vertical pictures at will, and if you must have glass slides (for microscopic examples) the adaptor will also take 2 in. by 2 in. slides. No alteration to projector—just remove the lens, insert the adaptor, using the existing lens.

Price complete with twin slide holder
£7 15 0

SIEMENS PROJECTORS

embody many unique features. The Siemens take-up does not act on the edges of the sprocket holes but distributes the strain over a large area. The high light efficiency is obtained by the special optical system using low voltage lamps—hence low running costs. Resistance is contained within the projector.

Home Model, 16mm., light efficiency 60 lumens, 200 watt lamp **£35**

Standard Model, 16mm., light efficiency 130 lumens, 200 watt lamp **£52 10 0**

Superlux Model, 16mm., light efficiency 250 lumens, 375 watt lamp **£90 0 0**

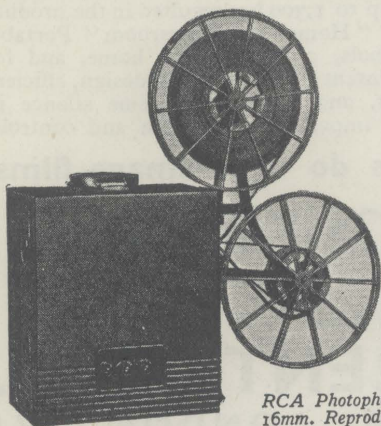
Sixteen-Nine Model, takes 16 or 9.5mm. films, light efficiency 130 lumens, 200 watt lamp **£59 10 0**

Siemens Projectors are demonstrated anywhere. Write for full details and name of nearest dealer.

CINEPRO LIMITED

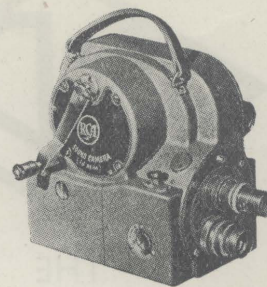
1, New Burlington Street, Regent Street, London, W.1

A COMPLETE 16 mm. SOUND FILM MAKING AND SHOWING EQUIPMENT



RCA Photophone
16mm. Reproducer £175

RCA Photophone Sound
Camera - - £130
Studio Attachment extra
Critical Focuser - £10
Prices do not apply in I.F.S.



All RCA's vast experience has been built into the new 16mm. Sound Camera and Reproducer. Talking pictures for educational, cultural and industrial purposes are now a more practical proposition than ever before.

It is impossible to describe here the many technical features of these models or to give you any idea of the results which can be obtained. We shall be only too glad, however, to send literature or give a full demonstration in our private theatre at Electra House.



ELECTRA HOUSE, VICTORIA EMBANKMENT, LONDON, W.C.2

Telephone: Temple Bar 2971/5.



SHARP DEFINITION

from edge to edge of the screen

PAILLARD-Bolex Engineers Score Again!

The only machine on the market showing films in **any of the three sub-standard sizes**, the "Bolex" is the supreme projector for educational purposes because it gives the widest possible choice of films and **pin-prick definitions from edge to edge of the screen**.

Add to this the fact that many valuable educational films are being made on 8mm. film, by school masters and others, because of its low cost and that these films will be available from libraries in this size only. This means that the "Bolex" G.3 is the only machine that can show them and the other two sizes as well.

Special Points : absolutely flickerless pictures. Tremendous screen illumination making totally darkened rooms unnecessary. Suitable for audiences up to 3,000. All-enclosed mechanism, 100 per cent. gear driven, giving silent running. Rapid motor rewind. Change from one film size to another only takes a few seconds. Interchangeable lamps 500w. and 250w. at will (the latter costing only 21/-). Still pictures for any length of time.

G.3 projector with accessories, £60
fitted 2 in. lens, and 500w. lamp.
Hugo Meyer special eccentric f/20mm.
lens for projection of 8mm. film. £4

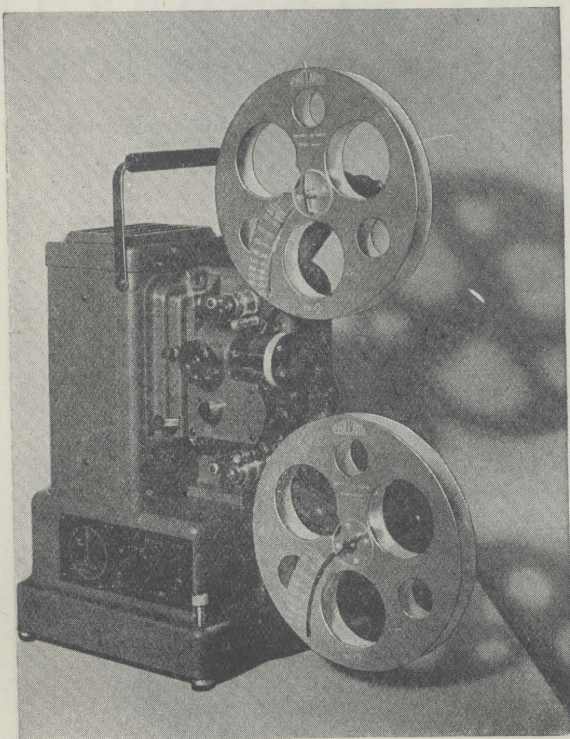
Model G. 916 for
projecting 9.5mm.
and 16mm. £47
films.

DEMONSTRATIONS GLADLY ARRANGED.

WRITE FOR PARTICULARS TO

CINEX LIMITED

70 High Holborn, London, W.C.1



world **FILM** news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

(Incorporating "Cinema Quarterly")

A Monthly Survey of Progress in Cinema & Broadcasting

"World Film News" is the "Cinema Quarterly" in new dress. Some months ago, associates of the paper decided to improve its news service.

In a hundred places creative work of one sort or another was being done.

In the film-world there was already an excellent service of commercial and trade news and an excellent service for fans. We needed a digest of news which would keep us informed of cinema's growing pains.

"World Film News" reports on creative people and creative efforts in all branches of cinema.

Controllers : John Grierson, A. Cavalcant, Forsyth Hardy, G. D. Robinson,
Norman Wilson, Basil Wright.

Published on the 18th of every month. Price 6d. From all bookstalls and
newsagents, or from the publishers, Oxford House, 9-15 Oxford Street, W.1

Film Art

independent film quarterly

NUMBER 8, will appear in May, and it is hoped to include the following :—

Fritz Arno Wagner, Basil Wright,
Lotte Reiniger, Oswald Blakeston,
also

ABSTRACT v **SURREALISME**
Man Ray v **S. John Woods**

Edited by Irene Nicholson & John C. Moore

Published from :—

5, JOUBERT STUDIOS,
JUBILEE PLACE, LONDON, S.W.3

1/- per copy, 1/1 post free
4/4 post free, per annum

ACADEMY CINEMA

165, Oxford Street

GERRARD 2981

(Organiser : ELSIE COHEN)

presents famous international films

NOW SHOWING :—

MARTA EGGERTH

IN HER LATEST VIENNESE TRIUMPH

"LIEBES MELODIE" A.

THE GAYEST FILM OF THE SEASON !

NOTICES OF NEW PRESENTATIONS
WILL BE SENT ON RECEIPT OF
NAME AND ADDRESS

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the Governors

I hereby make application to be admitted to membership of the British Film Institute and agree, if elected, to observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Rules and Regulations of the Institute for the time being in force.

I enclose herewith the sum of £1 1s. od. (or 10s. 6d. if after December 31st) and will pay annually on July 1st the yearly subscription of £1 1s. od.

Usual Signature Date

Full Name
Title, Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

Address.....

Profession or Occupation

This subscription form is for use of non-members of the British Film Institute. SIGHT AND SOUND is sent free of charge to members.

SIGHT AND SOUND

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Subscription for Four Issues, Post Free, 2s. 6d.

Please enter the following name as a subscriber to SIGHT AND SOUND for four Quarterly Issues commencing with the.....issue. I/we enclose

Cheque
 Postal Order for the sum of £ : :

Name and Address.....
 Block Letters

This order may be handed to your newsagent or bookseller or sent direct to The British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

STEUART FILMS

beg to announce that they are now the
Sole Distributors of
DANCE-KAUFMANN
TECHNICAL FILMS

*On Mathematical Processes.
On Harmonic Motions.
On Waves Radiation and Surges.
On Electrostatics.
On the Theory of Light.
On the Theory of Alternating Currents.
On the Theory of the Induction Motor.
On Electric Valves, etc.,
and others*

Loop or 50 ft. lengths
35 in or 16 mm. (non-flam.). Silent.

Price 30s. per film.

Send for List.

STEUART FILMS
THE STUDIOS
NORTH FAMBRIDGE, CHELMSFORD, ESSEX

A FULL SIZE SCREEN

● Perfectly Taut ● Perfectly Flat

The

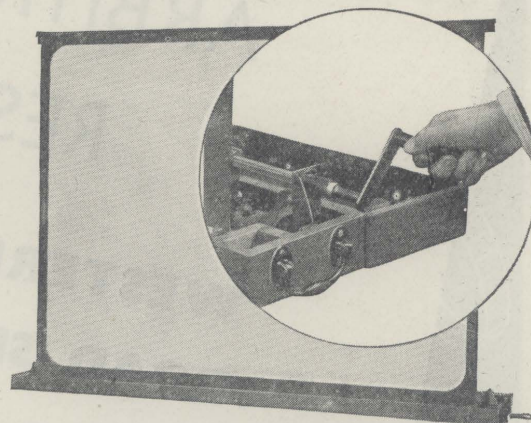
ENSIGN MAXFLAT

Size

84"

×

64"



An ideal screen giving a large picture, but occupying a minimum of space when folded. A device operates automatically as the screen reaches full extension imparting extra tension to the whole fabric, ensuring a smooth surface. Completely transportable. **£17-10-0**

ENSIGN Limited, LONDON, W.C.1

INDUSTRIAL FILMS

of

EDUCATIONAL INTEREST

These Films may be obtained from the under-mentioned Firm on loan to Educational Authorities.

Size : 16mm. or 35mm.

5 reels

SOUND

The following separate and distinct 5 reel programmes are available :

THIS PROGRESS WHEELS ONWARD MILES AHEAD

Each deals with the manufacture and use of motor cars and is also available in Silent form.

Also

TAKE THE WHEEL

(6 reels, 35 mm. Sound)

THE
AUSTIN MOTOR CO., LTD.
LONGBRIDGE BIRMINGHAM

STUDIO ONE

OXFORD CIRCUS (Adjoining Underground) GERRARD 3300

LONDON'S LATEST CONTINENTAL CINEMA

Organiser : VERA LLEWELYN.

FUTURE PRESENTATIONS

will include:

"THE STUDENT of PRAGUE"

with

DOROTHEA WIECK
ADOLPH WOHLBRUCK

Programmes will be forwarded
on receipt of name and address

For full particulars see daily press.

STUDIO TWO NEWS,
INTEREST,
DISNEY, etc.

16 mm. SOUND FILM ARBITRATION RESULT

WESTERN ELECTRIC ROAD SHOW SERVICE

provides means of showing all 16 mm.
BRITISH STANDARD FILMS

Following the Arbitration proceedings set up by the British Standards Institution, the S.M.P.E. Standard has been adopted as

THE OFFICIAL BRITISH STANDARD

Western Electric now have pleasure in announcing that as from the Autumn of this year their Road Show Service will be equipped with a new type 16 mm. Sound-on-Film apparatus designed to the official British Standard.

This important addition to the facilities available through the Western Electric Road Show Service will make possible the reproduction of any 16 mm. films made to the British Standard, as well as the reproduction of 16 mm. films with Sound-on-Disc.

The Road Show Service is the one thoroughly comprehensive service through which the distribution and exhibition of educational and industrial films can be effected with efficiency and showmanship.



WESTERN ELECTRIC CO. LTD., BUSH HOUSE, ALDWYCH, W.C.2

LONDON FILM SCHOOL

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR READERS

SIGHT AND SOUND has pleasure in announcing particulars of two Scholarships valued at £5 and £3 which it is offering to enable two of its readers to attend the London Film School during the period Monday, July 27th, to Friday, August 7th.

Readers who wish to enter for the Scholarships are invited to write a paper, not more than 1,000 words in length on :

MAKING THE MOST OF A SCHOOL PROJECTOR

The Scholarships will be awarded to the two readers who, in the opinion of the Editorial Board, submit the papers of highest merit.

Papers (which must be typewritten) must be accompanied by the Form printed below and must be received at the editorial offices not later than Monday, June 15th, 1936.

The following is an outline of the programme of the

LONDON FILM SCHOOL

organised by the

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

in association with the

EDUCATIONAL HANDWORK ASSOCIATION

July 27th to August 7th, 1936

Subject :

Technique and Manipulation

Film Production

The Use of the Film in School

Mass Demonstrations and the Use of Background Films

Tutors :

H. D. Waley, Technical Officer, British Film Institute ; R. Howard Cricks, A.R.P.S., Technical Editor, *The Ideal Kinema*.

Stuart Legg, B.A., Director of "Cable Ship," etc. ; Thomas Baird, M.A., Education Officer, G.P.O. Film Unit ; Basil Wright, M.A., Director of "Song of Ceylon," etc.

K. Boswell, M.A. (*History*) ; G. J. Cons, M.A. (*Geography*) ; J. A. Lauwerys, B.Sc. (*Physical Science*) ; H. R. Hewer, A.R.S.C., D.I.C., M.Sc. (*Biology*) ; A. Maxwell Lewis, B.Sc. (*Film Appreciation*).

G. D. Griffith, M.B.E., B.Sc., Headmaster, King Street L.C.C. School. Thomas Baird, M.A., Education Officer, G.P.O. Film Unit.

Also Lectures by :—

H. E. DANCE, JOHN GRIERSON, G. T. HANKIN, H.M.I., ALFRED HITCHCOCK, R. S. LAMBERT, WILLIAM FARR.

For further particulars see page 9 of this issue.

EXHIBITIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRACTICAL WORK.

Scholarship Entry Form

London Film School, July 27th to August 7th, 1936.

To SIGHT AND SOUND, c/o British Film Institute, 4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

I desire to enter for the London Film School Scholarship. Accordingly I submit herewith a paper on "Making the Most of a School Projector" for the consideration of the Editorial Board of SIGHT AND SOUND, and I agree to abide by their decision.

Name

Address

(Please use block capitals)

Date

Occupation

Signature

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

4, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1. Telephone : Museum 0607-8

Chairman : The Duke of Sutherland, K.T.

GOVERNORS : F. W. BAKER A. C. CAMERON, M.C., M.A. SIR CHAS. CLELAND, K.B.E.
W. R. FULLER DR. BENJAMIN GREGORY R. S. LAMBERT, M.A. J. J. LAWSON, M.P.
LADY LEVITA C. M. WOOLF

Acting General Manager
Secretary

W. FARR
Miss OLWEN VAUGHAN

The British Film Institute exists "to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction." Its objects are :—

1. To act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, particularly as regards education and general culture.
2. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction.
3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons on films and apparatus.
4. To link up the film trade and the cultural and educational interests of the country.
5. To encourage research into the various uses of the film.
6. To establish a national repository of films of permanent value.
7. To provide a descriptive and critical catalogue of films of educational and cultural value.
8. To advise Government Departments concerned with films.
9. To certify films as educational, cultural or scientific.
10. To undertake similar duties in relation to the Empire.

WHAT IT NEEDS

In pursuance of this programme the British Film Institute desires to secure the support of all bodies and individuals that have at heart the encouragement of the best type of film and the full development of the constructive uses of the cinema. Alike in the public cinema and in the schoolroom and lecture room, the film has a growing influence upon thought and action. The purpose of the British Film Institute is to encourage the best features of this influence and to draw together all those who are concerned in its exercise. A strong membership of the Institute will be a guarantee that this work is being worthily and fruitfully performed. You are invited to lend it your support either by subscribing as an individual or by inducing corporate organizations to which you belong to apply for membership.

It is proposed to form Branches of the Institute throughout the country. Information as to the necessary procedure to establish these will be forwarded on request.

HOW TO OBTAIN MEMBERSHIP

The Institute being a Company limited by guarantee it is necessary for intending members to fill up the form of application which will be found on page iv and forward it together with subscription for the year ending June 30th. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded for perusal if desired. Corporate Bodies can become members of the Institute by paying an annual subscription of not less than £5 5s. Such subscribers would entitle the affiliated organization to commensurate privilege of membership.

Members will be entitled to receive publications issued by the Institute, including (1) the official organ, SIGHT AND SOUND; (2) a monthly review of entertainment films and of films suitable for educational or instructional purposes; (3) an annual report on the year's work and (4) informative leaflets on technical and other matters.

Copies of SIGHT AND SOUND are available to non-members at the price of 6d. per copy (7½d., including postage) and a separate subscription form will be found on page iv.

Editorial Offices
THE BRITISH
FILM INSTITUTE,
4, GREAT RUSSELL STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1.
TELEPHONE :
MUSEUM 0607/8

Editorial Secretary
R. R. TAYLOR

SIGHT & SOUND

Sole Advertisement
Agents :
MESSRS. AUBREY
W. HAMMOND & CO;
29-30, High Holborn,
LONDON, W.C.1.

Telephone
Chancery 7850:

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

VOLUME 5, No. 17

CONTENTS

SPRING, 1936

	page		page
COVER : from THE TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE, by Henry Hathaway (Paramount)		THE FILM LESSON E. F. Mills	33
QUALITY AND QUOTA	1	PHYSICAL EDUCATION FILMS .. R. E. Roper	36
NEW VISUAL CULTURE .. Prof. L. Hogben	6	FILM SUPPLY R. M. Allardyce	38
THINGS TO COME.. .. Elizabeth Bowen	10	A HOME MADE TITLING OUTFIT H. D. Waley	41
SCISSORS MAKE FILMS .. Lotte Reiniger	13	LIGHTING OF SURGICAL FILMS R. G. W. Ollerenshaw	51
FILM AND CIVIC EDUCATION .. Thos. Baird	17	LOOKING BACK A.S. Newman and W. Vinten	54

NEWS AND REVIEWS :

FILMS OF THE QUARTER, by Alistair Cooke, page 20 ; CONTINENTAL AND DOCUMENTARY FILMS, by A. Vesselo, page 26 ; NOTES OF THE QUARTER, page 3 ; PUBLICATIONS, page 43 ; WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING, page 46 ; NEWS FROM SOCIETIES, page 48 ; NEW APPARATUS, page 56.

QUALITY AND QUOTA

THE Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, which came into operation on January 1st, 1928, expires on September 30th, 1938. The future of the Act has been for some time now the subject of deliberation by the Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade set up under the Act, the Film Group of the Federation of British Industries, the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, and by less formal groups such as the producers of documentary films. So far as the views of these various bodies are known there seems at present to be little agreement among them. They are now to be invited to place their views before a Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Trade "to consider the position of British films, having in mind the approaching expiry of the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, and to advise whether any, and if so what, measures are still required in the public interest to promote the production, renting, and exhibition of such films." Lord Moyne is Chairman of the Committee, and the members are Mr. A. C. Cameron, a Governor of the British Film Institute ;

Mr. J. Stanley Holmes, M.P. ; Mr. J. J. Mallon ; the Hon. Eleanor Plumer, a member of the Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade and of the Advisory Council of the British Film Institute ; and Lt.-Col. Sir Arnold Wilson, M.P., Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the Board of Trade.

While those directly engaged in the production, distribution, and exhibition of films will be most affected, the future of the Act is also a national matter of great importance to all cinemagoers. The Departmental Committee is to advise on the measures which are required *in the public interest*.

The Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, was passed "to restrict blind booking and advance booking of cinematograph films, and to secure the renting and exhibition of a certain proportion of British films." It is said that the provisions against blind and advance booking have been ineffective and only honoured in the breach. The sections of the Act relating to Quota have undoubtedly made a large contribution to the establishment of a British film producing industry. The coming of "talkies" in

1929 and financial difficulties in America in 1930 also contributed.

By the Quota sections of the Act each renter has to acquire and distribute and each exhibitor has to exhibit a minimum quantity of British films in proportion to the total of British and foreign films distributed or exhibited. Renters' quota rose from $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1928-9 to 20 per cent. for 1935-6 and the succeeding years, and exhibitors' quota rose from 5 per cent. in 1928-9 to 20 per cent. in 1935-6. The renters as a whole have each year acquired and distributed more British film than the minimum quantity required by the Act, and the production of British feature films has risen from about 30 in 1927, the year before the Act came into effect, to 189 in 1934-5; the number of British films required to meet renters' Quota liability in 1934-5 was 101. The foreign renting companies, with one exception, have usually registered just the minimum quantity of British film required of them; almost all the British companies have registered far more than was required of them. Since the foreign companies are naturally concerned only to comply with the Act so that they may distribute their imported films it is not surprising to learn that the worst British films and the best foreign films have been distributed by the foreign companies, while the best British films and the worst foreign films have been distributed by the British companies, which have been concerned, beyond the requirements of the Act, with developing the British film production industry.

Exhibitors as a whole have, each year, shown 70 to 120 per cent. more British film than was required by the Act, but individual exhibitors have experienced difficulty in meeting their Quota liabilities and have been compelled to show bad British films in order to meet them. Unable to obtain good British films until after they have been shown at a neighbouring cinema, and being unwilling to show them after the neighbouring cinema, many exhibitors have been compelled to book Quota "quickies," distributed by some of the foreign companies, in order to meet their Quota liabilities. These Quota "quickies," on which no effort has been expended to make them good, do harm to the exhibitor and bring discredit on British films as a whole. It should be noted that the position is partly created by trade policies with regard to bookings and the circuits belonging or affiliated to British producing companies.

However this may be, the fact that Quota "quickies" have become possible and have been fostered by the Act demands attention. A return to a higher Quota liability for renters than for exhibitors, such as existed during the first seven years of the Act, would allow a margin of choice for exhibitors and might relieve some of the compulsion to show bad British films distributed by some renting companies, thus checking the production of them. Suggestions have also been made for some more direct method of enforcing a standard of quality which a British film must reach if it is to be registered as a British film under the Act.

Some favour the setting up of a board to assess the entertainment value of films; others maintain that a minimum amount of money should be spent on any film to be registered under the Act. It is obvious that the expenditure of a minimum amount of money is no guarantee in itself of quality, in the film industry or any other, and it is clear also that if such a test were to be applied reservations would have to be made in respect of films costing less than the minimum which are shown to have special merit. But the success of any scheme which aims at assessing "special merit," "entertainment value," or "quality," will depend on the machinery and the personnel of any committee which may be established to do the assessing.

The producers of documentary films have had some experience of the working of a "special exhibition value" clause. Under the present Act all films except commercial advertising films and newsreels can be registered as exhibitors' quota, but films of natural scenery and of industrial or manufacturing processes, scientific films, including natural history, and educational films cannot also be registered for renters' quota unless the producers can prove "special exhibition value" to the Board of Trade. The producers of documentary films maintain, with a good deal of evidence, that the effect of this Section of the Act has been to hamper an important and significant part of British film production. The documentary film, as we know it to-day, has developed since the passing of the Act. British documentary films have obtained an international reputation and a wide popularity in this country. The output of them is now large and is increasing, but most of them cannot be registered under the present Act. On the other hand, the production of British short films which have been registered under the Act has fallen from 170,000 feet to 68,000 feet between 1929 and 1935. As a result there have not been sufficient "shorts" for Quota requirements since 1931, but this deficiency can be, and has been, met by British "long" films available in excess of Quota requirements for "long" films. It would seem that some adjustment is possible which would enable Quota requirements for "shorts" to be met by "shorts" and encourage the production of documentary films. But in any event, in any new Act passed to promote the best in British film production no impediment should be placed or allowed to remain on the production, distribution, and exhibition of documentary films.

The Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, has materially helped to put British films on the map, not only of this country, but also of the British Empire and even of America. An industry has been established giving employment to thousands of people. A large public has been found for good British films. Every effort should be made in any new Act which may be passed to promote the production of good films and to preclude the temporary profitable exploitation of bad films produced under the protection of an Act of Parliament.



From *LIEBESMELODIE*, an Austrian film based on a Franz Lehar operetta, with Marta Eggerth

By courtesy of the Academy Cinema

NOTES OF THE QUARTER

National Film Society of Canada

The recent formation of the National Film Society of Canada is only one indication of an interest in educational and cultural films which is growing in various parts of the Empire. It is likely that the National Film Society may be the nucleus of a national clearing house for information. This is the recommendation which is made in a Report on Educational and Cultural Films financed by a grant from the Canadian Committee of the Carnegie Corporation to the National Film Society of Canada. It is clear after studying the survey of the existing situation that there is need for increased co-ordination in the use of educational films through a central clearing house. Further, any such central organisation would assist in raising public appreciation of the film to-day.

The British Film Institute welcomes this movement to form what would be a National Film Institute in Canada, and it is giving all the advice and help which it can in these initial stages. The

report refers freely to the *Film in National Life* and the establishment and aims of the British Film Institute, and it is obvious that the work and experience of the latter will be of the greatest help to the promoters of the Canadian scheme.

In the meantime the N.F.S. is continuing the work it set itself at its formation in 1935. In Montreal and Ottawa, and more recently in Toronto and Vancouver, Film Societies have been formed which are affiliated as branches of the N.F.S. and which show to their members films of unusual merit. According to the last leaflet received, the Montreal Branch recently gave a show very much akin to the London Film Society's Sunday afternoon shows, the programme consisting of *Three Songs of Lenin*, *Lot in Sodom* and a Fischinger abstract film. The B.F.I.'s Monthly Film Bulletin is proving of considerable value in compiling these programmes of films, and the leaflet announcing the last show quoted almost in full the criticism of *Three Songs of Lenin* published in the Bulletin.

The Montreal Branch has also recently started another service for its members, the regular publication of *Film Society News*, a pamphlet which will be useful in providing a means of exchange of opinion by members of the Society.

Film Institute in South Africa

A report on the establishment of a Film Institute in South Africa has been presented to the Minister of Education. In constitution and functions it will be closely similar to the B.F.I. As a first step, the Government of the Union of South Africa has decided to establish a Film Library which will be administered by the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research of the Union Department of Education. A grant has been made for the purchase of 16 mm. educational films. It is probable that the next step will be the ratification by South Africa of the arrangements for freeing educational films from customs duty in accordance with the International Convention and Section 7 of the Finance Act, 1935, and the appointment of the Film Section of the National Bureau in conjunction with the Advisory Board of the Film Institute as the competent body to certify films as educational.

Film Library in Australia

Meanwhile in Australia interest in the development of educational films and in extending their use is just as active. A proposal which has recently been put forward embodies the creation of a "Commonwealth visual education bureau" subsidised by the Commonwealth Government and of smaller film libraries in the States. The first aim would be to select and secure, by purchase or exchange, suitable films for inclusion in a Federal library. No decision has yet been reached on this matter by the Commonwealth Government, but the Institute awaits the further development of the scheme with particular interest in view of the activities of its recently-formed National Film Library. It is known that the scheme submitted allowed for co-operation with the film libraries which had already been established in other countries.

It will be remembered that Mr. G. T. Hankin, a member of the Advisory Council of the B.F.I., on recent visits to South Africa and Canada, lectured on educational films and gave demonstrations of them. The B.F.I. has been in continual correspondence with organisations seeking advice and information in different parts of the Empire, and it welcomes these practical steps towards the establishment of Film Institutes.

The Hon. Eleanor Plumer

The President of the Board of Trade has recently appointed the Hon. Eleanor Plumer as a member of the Cinematograph Films Advisory Committee in place of Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher, who has retired. The British Film Institute particularly welcomed the news of the appointment as Miss Plumer is an active member of the Institute. She has spoken on its work at meetings throughout the country, she serves on a number of its committees, and from the time of its establishment has taken every opportunity

to encourage active interest in the work of the Institute and in the aims and objects for which it stands.

Miss Plumer, along with Mr. A. C. Cameron, M.C., who is a Governor of the British Film Institute, will also serve on the Committee which has just been appointed by the Board of Trade to consider the position of British films, having in mind the approaching expiry of the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927.

News Theatres

The pioneer News Theatres have proved the success of their experiment, and with the growing popularity of programmes of cartoons, news and interest shorts, newsreel cinemas are beginning to multiply rapidly. Their likely success in railway travelling is becoming evident, too; so attractive has the Pathé news cinema on the London-Leeds route proved, that a similar one is to be introduced by the L.N.E.R. on the Leeds-Newcastle-Edinburgh route.

In London one of the latest news theatres to open is the Monseigneur in Agar Street, Strand, which has been built on the site of the old Strand News Theatre, and plans are under consideration for the construction of several other newsreel cinemas in London. The old Cinema House has been rebuilt as two cinemas, a news theatre, which will be known as Studio Two, occupying the basement. Studio Two has installed a new device, the "scinetape," to keep its patrons informed of the latest news. The scinetape, it is announced, enables the members of the audience "almost without moving their eyes" to read the news every half-hour "without in any way impairing the presentation of the film." The cinema on the ground floor will be known as Studio One, and its declared policy is "to increase the popularity of the foreign film among the average intelligent cinemagoer." We review elsewhere *Veille d'Armes*, its opening presentation.

Other parts of the country are not to be behind London in the construction of luxury news theatres. "The finest news theatre in the world," it is announced, is to be built at Portsmouth. Bournemouth's first news theatre, the Bijou Cinema de Luxe, was opened in January, and Liverpool is to have its second news reel cinema, when the Prince of Wales Theatre has been converted for the purpose.

We learn that Mr. Cyril Ray has taken over the management of Manchester's news theatre, The Tatler. The proprietors are a small private company who have interested themselves in the aims and objects of the British Film Institute and who have done much to foster its principles in the commercial cinema and to develop a policy of catering for the intelligent filmgoer. Mr. Ray, whose critical attitude to some of the ordinary cinema programmes was well known through his writings in the *Manchester City News* and the *Manchester Guardian*, was an active worker in the Merseyside Film Institute Society before his departure to Manchester. It is a rare occurrence for an exhibiting firm—other than a specialist cinema—to

approach a Film Society amateur in this way, and it is gratifying news to those who are interested in the aims of the British Film Institute and active in promoting its work in different parts of the country.

The Arts Theatre, Cambridge

Among other recently opened theatres, the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, is of special interest. It intends to develop a new policy of entertainment, not limiting itself either to the presentation of films or stage productions, but sponsoring opera, ballet, music and drama, as well as films. The building itself, which seats 600, is designed on modern lines, with up-to-date equipment of stage and auditorium, and is in the heart of the town. At the Gala performance on the occasion of the opening on 4th February, Willy Forst's *Maskerade* was presented. Miss J. M. Harvey, who was for so long Secretary of the Film Society, London, is associated with the cinema side of the enterprise.

A Pioneer in Educational Films

Mr. H. Bruce Woolfe, chief of G-B. Instructional, has recently completed 25 years' work in the film industry, and a reception was given in his honour at Cleveland Hall on March 26th. Members of the G-B. Instructional staff and the Press were present, and messages of congratulation were read from Mr. Mark Ostrer, Mr. John Grierson, Mr. Paul Rotha, Sir Stephen Tallents, Mr. Oliver Pike and from the Governors of the British Film Institute.

Mr. Bruce Woolfe began his film career by purchasing an East End Hall in 1911, in which he showed some of the most famous films of all time, including the Italian film, *Quo Vadis*. Even at this time he was anxious to build up a library of short pictures that, in his own words, "would be useful not only in theatres, but also for educational purposes." Immediately after the war, he was able to collect

a few friends, and continue work with a unit which later became well-known—British Instructional Films. In an old army hut at Elstree the first nature films were produced in collaboration with Mary Field and Percy Smith.

Mr. Bruce Woolfe was appointed as chief of the G-B. I. Unit in 1933.

Mr. Paul Rotha and Strand Film Company

Mr. Paul Rotha has joined the Strand Film Co., Ltd., as Director of Productions. The Strand Film Co. is one of the few commercial film companies which specialises in making documentary films, and production in 1936 has begun with films for the Ministry of Labour, dealing with the Training and Instructional Centres for the unemployed Juvenile Transference schemes, and a series of subjects of national and Empire importance made by recognised and qualified documentary directors.

Among Mr. Paul Rotha's recent successful films are *The Face of Britain* and *Shipyard*, and his past films include *Contact* and *Great Cargoes*. The recently published book *Documentary Film* by Mr. Rotha is reviewed by Professor L. Hogben elsewhere in this issue.



Elizabeth Bergner as Rosalind and Sophie Stewart as Celia in *AS YOU LIKE IT*, directed by Dr. Paul Czinner. (Fox)

THE NEW VISUAL CULTURE

DOCUMENTARY FILM by Paul Rotha†

THE CINEMA TODAY by John Grierson*

A Review by Professor Lancelot Hogben

THE reader who sees my name coupled with this review may well ask why I (who have never seen the inside of a studio) have been asked by the editor to review Rotha's book. I may frankly state that I do not know the answer. However, I can give two sufficient reasons why

that there was once a real body in the shell and real flesh around the bone. Greek was a living culture when the founders of our grammar schools were missionaries of the social gospel which Wycliffe penned on the cover of the 1384 edition of the English Bible. Like Wycliffe, they believed that

"the Bible teaches the government of the people, by the people and for the people." So it was a desperately important matter to purge the text from popish innovations.

Mechanics was a living subject when the founders of English empirical science formed themselves into the Invisible College (which afterwards became the Royal Society), and framed their policy in accordance with Bacon's eloquent plea that "the true and lawful goal of science is to endow human life with new powers and inventions." You will find precious little in Robert Boyle's works about curiosity and knowledge for the sake of knowledge or any of the other pass-



From CONTACT, by Paul Rotha

he might do so. The first is that Rotha's book ought to be read by people who are not experts in cinema, and a reviewer who is not an expert in cinema is the better judge of whether it can be read painlessly. The other is that I happen to be interested in education.

As ordinarily understood education is like the record of the rocks. It teems with shells and skeletons of what were once living creatures, now embedded in an unyielding matrix of respectability. If you trace back the history of the fossil species which make up a curriculum, you will always find

words served up by the professional mystagogues to decadent intellectuals. Valuing, as Boyle put it, "no knowledge save it hath a tendency to use," they put their wits at the service of British mercantile expansion, believing that "the goods of mankind may be much increased by the naturalist's insight into the trades." Within a century the Newtonian system had ceased to be a stimulus to further progress in the official seats of English learning, and British science renewed its youth in Edinburgh, where a new Royal Society associated with the names of Black, Home and Hutton, fathers of modern chemistry, the theory of heat and geology, was formed to advance "the arts and manufactures." Fifty years later the same phrase occurs in the

† *Documentary Film*, Faber and Faber, 12s. 6d.

* An Essay in *The Arts Today*, John Lane (Bodley Head), 8s. 6d.

articles of the Royal Institution where Davy and Faraday began researches which made cinema, broadcasting and television possible. Those were the days, when the state of affairs in the older universities prompted Babbage to write his essay on *The Decline of Science in England*.

There would be ample material for an essay on the Decline of English Social Culture to-day. If you are tempted to write it, read Rotha's book first. There is no need to be alarmed about the future of a civilisation which can still devise new instruments for the enlargement of human understanding. "The third and fourth decades of this century," says Rotha, "have seen the universal rise of two new and immensely powerful instruments for the imparting of knowledge. Radio and cinema, jointly or separately, represent the biggest revolution in instructional methods since the introduction of the printing press." If Rotha errs, he errs by understatement in the good English way. It is one of the paradoxical features of contemporary society that confidence in education has given place to the cult of the Overman while advancing science has been elaborating an apparatus for general enlightenment with a range transcending the most optimistic confidence of educationists in any previous age.

The new university

The custodians of a new social culture are those who command new instruments of communication. Hence it is not surprising to recapture in Rotha's book and in Grierson's preface, as in his essay in the *Arts of Today*, the flavour of documentary diction characteristic of the great pamphleteers, with a tempo appropriate to the new medium. If civilisation survives, the cinema will be the university of the future. Since we keep our beefeaters for exhibition in England, the university will remain with us to discharge the present function of the flicks. No doubt there will still be professors of political science retailing the resonant rhetoric of Burke, declaiming on justice and sovereignty with a lecture room style modelled after Charles James Fox. They will be valued for what they are, professional entertainers, blind and deaf to the new agencies which are already shattering constitutions, shaping social policies

and moulding the mass opinion of countries where the electioneering technique of the late Lord Balfour is as dead as the Dodo or the decalogue.

Rotha and Grierson are primarily concerned with one and the same aspect of the new university, which is "to bring the new world of our citizenship into imagination." They deal with the growing body of educational cinematography which has been encouraged by the Government, and by large industrial concerns with no assistance from the Trade in entertainment. To those who view with alarm the dwindling confidence of the plain man in



From VILLAGE HARVEST, a documentary by Marion Grierson

(Strand Films)

democratic institutions and the paralysis of creative social effort in countries where they have been replaced by military dictatorships Rotha's book should disclose a new horizon of hopefulness. A man or woman who does not realise what scope for intelligent effort directed towards the advancement of human welfare along non-party lines the use of Documentary offers belongs to the political past and has no place in the political future. Even films which are primarily produced in the interests of large capitalists can be effectively used to bring this new world of our citizenship into the imagination without inevitably alienating the support of those who finance them. Much to the embarrassment of their competitors firms which maintain a relatively high standard of life and efficiency are not specially averse to letting it be known. A documentary film of the Ovaltine farms is a nationwide campaign for a rationally planned organisation of scientific food production. A documentary of Bournville is better than six hundred electioneering perorations on slum clearances. A documentary of the Co-operative Wholesale Society's schools for



GRANTON
TRAWLER,
G.P.O. film by
Grierson and Anstey

their native employees literally and visually brings the whole British Commonwealth of Nations face to face with its responsibilities to the backward populations of the Crown Colonies.

Much of what Rotha has to say is written from the standpoint of the man who is engaged in film production and takes his job with a high sense of social responsibility. For the rest of us the main issue is how to give him more rope. There are some obvious ways in which this can be done, and done effectively on a big scale. One is the promotion of co-operative cinemas which will give scope to documentary while satisfying the demand for entertainment. Another is that money and effort spent in diffusing political propaganda might be far more usefully employed in promoting *ad hoc* societies to finance the production of documentary films dealing with specific social issues of national importance. Thus the widespread undernutrition which results from unemployment has prompted protests from Sir Gowland Hopkins in the presidential chair of the Royal Society and from Sir John Orr at the British Association. The willing co-operation of men of science, the financial support of persons belonging to different political parties (or to none at all) and the creative work of film directors with the outlook of Grierson and Rotha could be enlisted to quicken the social imagination of England, if the lesson of Rotha's book were brought home to people who now dissipate a great deal of sincere effort and organising ability in utterly futile activities.

If we are to make the fullest use of the cinema as an instrument for creating a new social culture,

perhaps the greatest need of the moment is to get the Board of Education to see the, as yet, totally unexploited possibilities which it offers. The equipment of every elementary school with a cinema projector would be a financial fleabite compared with the recent additions to the fighting services. We might then be able to enlist the leaders of Documentary in another side of this business of bringing "the new world of our citizenship into the imagination." Science has created possibilities of human welfare which vastly outsize the utopias of idealists in the time when Morris wrote and worked for his earthly Paradise. As taught in our schools to meet the vocational needs of private enterprise, science is like the Vulgate in the time of Wycliffe. To make mankind aware that science teaches the possibility of plenty of the people by the people and for the people, we have got to translate it into the vernacular. That is something very different from playing up to the Heard instinct. Popular science as served up in the tabloids, *Time and Tide* or the *New Statesman*, introduces you to a very thrilling mystery, and convinces you that scientists are very clever people to penetrate the veil. Education for the age of plenty means shewing people that science is not a mystery. It is organised workmanship. This can only be done if you shew people how science has arisen out of the common experience of mankind to meet the common needs of mankind.

New powers of interpretation

Up to date educational films have merely been produced to stimulate interest. No one has yet fully recognised the promise of a new method of exposition. The conclusions of science are only mysterious when the imagination recoils from the effort of linking the parts of the model to the symbolism which is used to describe their relations. This is a purely visual difficulty, which arises from the fact that the printing press is a defective method

of communicating knowledge, forcing us to reconstruct from permutations of two dimensional figures the living four dimensional reality which the film brings to our senses directly. The film could be used to make mathematical processes which can only be grasped by exceptionally imaginative individuals accessible to the intelligence of the average man. A film which started with the geometrical orientation of calendar monuments in the priestly civilisations of antiquity, shewed us the first earth measurements of the Alexandrians, the navigational astronomy of Magellan and a modern surveyor at work on an ordnance survey could make the bugbear of the classroom the most breathless adventure of the curriculum. The vast amount of time wasted in doing bad experiments with inferior apparatus and defective manual dexterity could be filled with historical scenarios of pivotal experiments (like Andrade's charade at the last International Congress on the History of Science), and contemporary close-ups of competent demonstrations undertaken by skilled technicians. So far educational films have confined themselves to a worthy but trivial description of unfamiliar objects like Laplanders milking reindeer, or the family life of snails. What we have yet to realise is that the film gives us new powers of interpretation.

It is a genuine but nevertheless a comparatively small advantage to be able to see the life history of the eel at one sitting. The fact remains that anyone could watch it, if he had the time, money and inclination. There are large numbers of people who would never be able to understand spherical trigonometry or the dynamics of a particle, if they had to rely on a book. I doubt if there are any ordinary people who could not quite easily do so, if the film director took the matter in hand.

Block printing made anatomy a science. The cinema may make dynamical concepts the common property of mankind. I hope that the film will provide a focus for co-operation between the scientist and the artist like the art of engraving in the sixteenth century. Consequently I also hope that Rotha will cut out the antiscientific humbug of Hegel's dialectic, when he writes his next book. Rotha thinks, as I do, that the new Russia is attempting many things which we ought to study and copy. If they have saddled themselves with an overdose of Prussian mysticism, there is no reason why we should so so, and I am confident that if Rotha wishes to induce Englishmen to adopt the best features of their social experiment, he would be wise to stand four-square in the English tradition of experimental science.

LONDON FILM SCHOOL

THE Rt. Hon. Earl de la Warr, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, will open the Second Film School organised by the British Film Institute in conjunction with the Educational Handwork Association. The School will be held in the University of London Institute of Education from July 27th to August 7th.

The courses have been carefully planned, and together they cover a wide field of interest. The *Film Production* course will be essentially practical and will be conducted by Stuart Legg, Thomas Baird and Basil Wright, all well known experts at the G.P.O. Film Unit. While dealing fully with the theory of film projection, the course on *Technique and Manipulation* will also be of a practical character. The lecturers are H. D. Waley, Technical Officer, British Film Institute, and R. Howard Cricks, A.R.P.S. Under the general title of *The Use of the Film in the School*, lectures will be given by experts who have used the film in the teaching of specific subjects, and demonstration lessons will be given to classes of children. The following are the lecturers who are taking part in this section of the School:

History: K. Boswell, M.A., Lecturer, Royal Military Academy.

Geography: G. J. Cons, M.A., Lecturer in Geography, Goldsmiths' College.

Physical Science: J. A. Lauwerys, B.Sc., A.I.C., Lecturer in Methods of Science, University of London Institute of Education.

Biology: H. R. Hewer, A.R.S.C., D.I.C., M.Sc., Lecturer in Zoology, Imperial College of Science and Technology.

Film Appreciation: A. Maxwell Lewis, B.Sc., Physics Master, Hemel Hempstead Grammar School.

The chair at these lectures will be taken by Miss Mary Field, Leonard Brooks, Divisional Inspector of Schools, L.C.C., F. A. Hoare, Dr. Julian Huxley, G. T. Hankin, H.M.I.

Mass Demonstrations and the Use of Background Films will be the subject of another section of the Film School, in which G. D. Griffith, Organiser of the St. Pancras Experiment in Mass Demonstrations and T. Baird, G.P.O. Film Unit, will take part.

A series of general lectures has also been arranged, the lecturers including Alfred Hitchcock, John Grierson, R. S. Lambert, G. T. Hankin, H.M.I., H. E. Dance (co-producer of Dance-Kaufmann films) and W. Farr, Assistant General Manager, B.F.I. The following have consented to take the chair at these lectures: S. Rowson, J. Brown, Senior Assistant Education Officer, L.C.C., S. H. Wood, M.C., Public Relations Officer, Board of Education, R. Steuart, Director of Steuart Films, and St. John Pym, Director of Staff Administration, B.B.C.

As an additional interesting feature of this year's school, visits are being arranged to some of the large film studios.

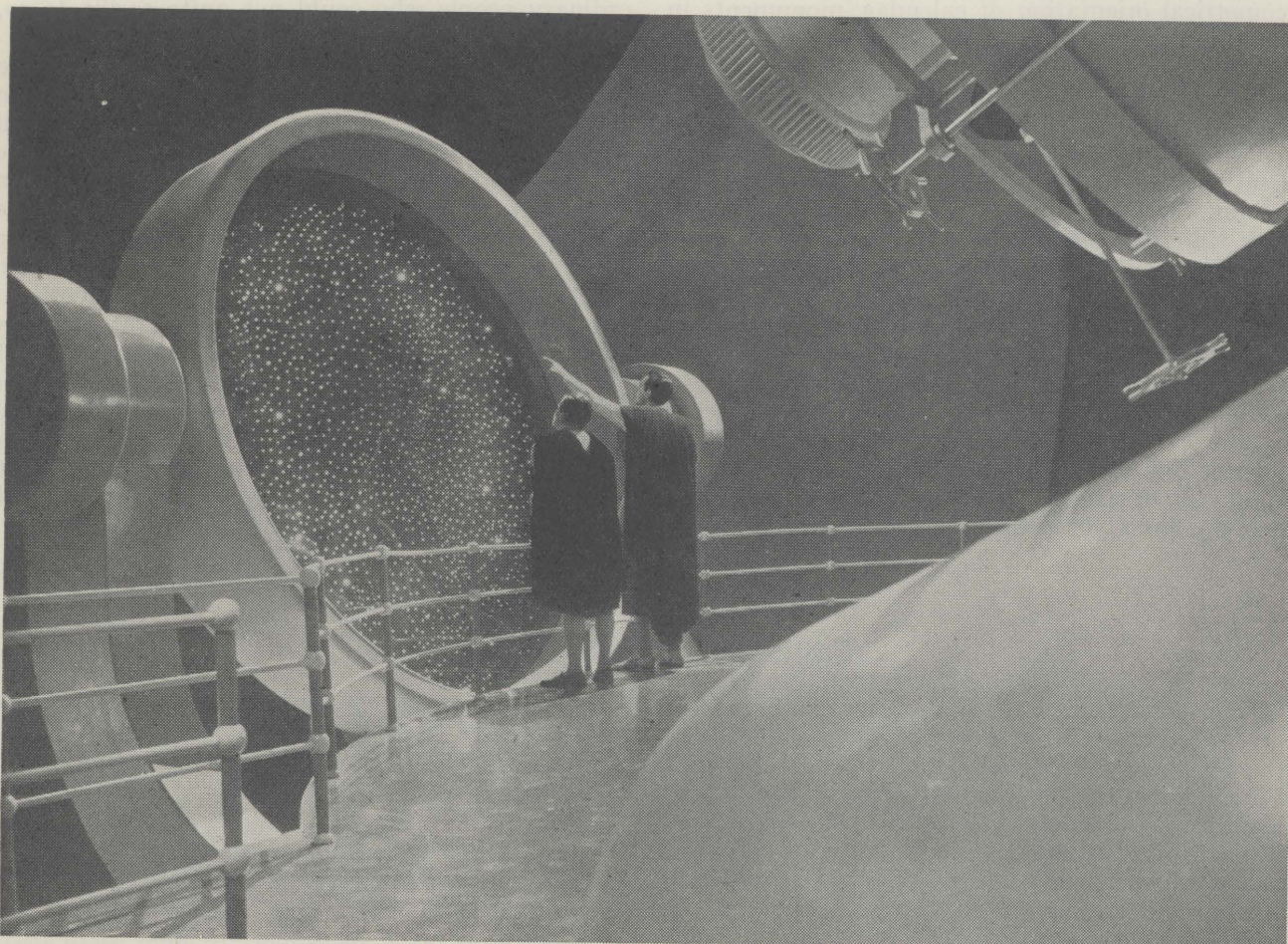
Copies of the Syllabus may be obtained from Mr. J. Kay, 74, Limesdale Gardens, Edgware, Middlesex.

SIGHT AND SOUND is offering two scholarships in connection with the Film School. Full particulars will be found on page vii.

THINGS TO COME

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION

By Elizabeth Bowen



The giant telescope in one of the later sequences of *THINGS TO COME*, a London Films Production, directed by Menzies

Illustrations by courtesy of United Artists

MR. WELLS' *Things to Come* is, above all, spectacular. But it is unlike the run of "spectacle" films, such as Cecil B. de Mille's, with their teeming casts and ultra-gorgeous settings, that excite the eye and stun the imagination and culminate in some monster cataclysm. The technique of *Things to Come* is controlled and quiet; the cast, all things considered, unexpectedly small; the actors being used with such intelligence that not a figure appears without effect. Though the horrors of war, most notably an air raid on an Everytown that is the London of to-day, appear in the film early, *Things to Come* is memorable not for its use of horror, its power to wring the nerves, but for its command of two important elements: size and rhythm. Detail is used also, with feeling and precision, but dramatic use of detail is not an innovation; it is for its power to present size

emotionally, to make one feel either an object or an event to be unprecedented, extraordinary, that this film seems to me chiefly remarkable. Except in one or two of the major Russian films (*e.g.* the shot in *The Fall of St. Petersburg* of the equestrian statue rearing over two peasants' tiny figures) I have never seen sheer enormousness photographed before. Our feeling for size is odd; it is childish and non-rational; one beholds very large objects with feelings of dread and pleasure. Given even the most expert photography, the dimensions of the screen make the representation of size difficult. The Eiffel Tower photographs like a toy. On the screen, the best models, the most (in their first conception) impressive sets too often appear tame, or suggest trickery. Machines and buildings seldom command the screen, dwarf the actor or make us feel their majesty; here they do.

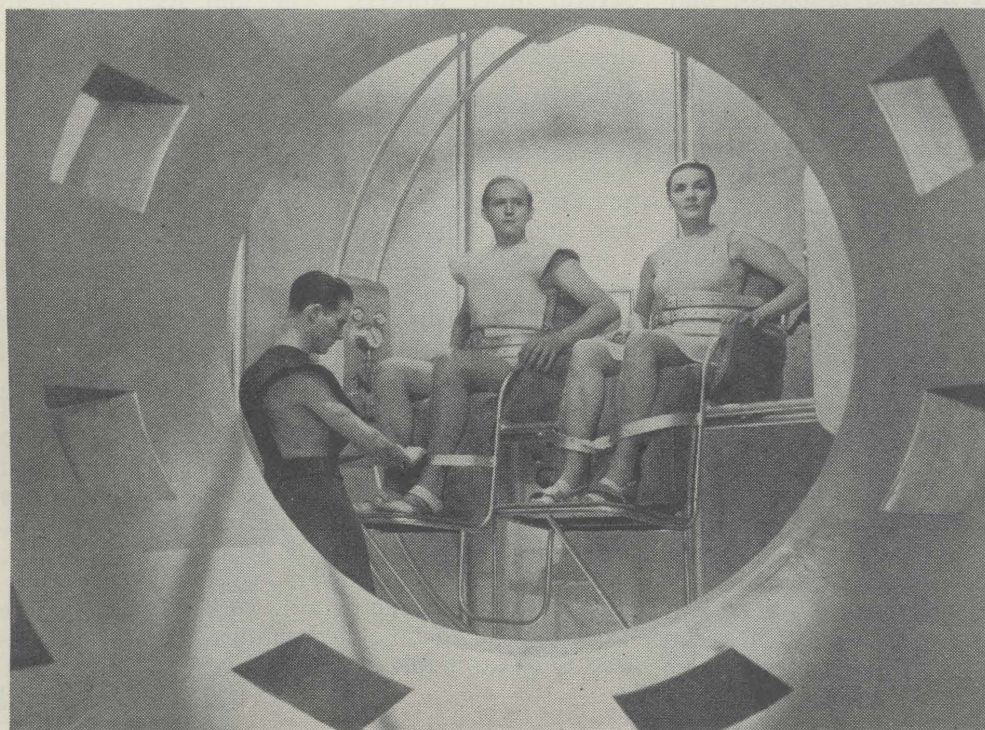
The Envoy from World Airmen

Mr. Wells is a romanticist with a vital attitude towards science. He is an artist with a profound mistrust of art. He is a humanitarian and a moralist first of all: his conception of *Things to Come* lacks both the sternness and the frivolity of an artist's. If the film has a "message," it shows that passion wrecks us, that it is fatal to rate too high a person or an illusion. It is as novelist that his touch here seems to me least happy. He oscillates between the heroic and the domestic. The close-ups of personal drama are not telling; the Cabals and the Passworthys gain little by having been particularized. The women could have stayed cyphers; he chose to make them bores. The dialogue beside the impressive action sounds trivial and once or twice grotesque. Colloquially didactic, almost all sentimental, much of the talk is cackle and I wish he had cut it. His imagination, which



is gigantic, works visually: all the drama is here implicit in the actors' movements, and in the situations Mr. Wells creates. There should be less talk—more of Mr. Bliss's magnificent music, with its doomful pulse like distant savage drumming, more sirens, chimes, deadly drone of planes, ruined silences of the old world, humming dynamos of the new. Rhetoric, with a loud-speaker-like, impersonal quality, has, it is true, its place here, and there are some fine passages. But in the best sequences sounds and images fuse, heightening the rhythm.

Some of the shots are beautiful; significant in the high poetic sense. The film might well be seen for these alone; they woo the imagination instead of bludgeoning it. The door of the festive house thrown open on Christmas evening, above it, the anxious searchlights crossing in the sky—the shadow of deadly planes falling on sunny white cliffs—the child running along the cheerful grassy



Preparing for the journey through space

skyline to the crashed plane exuding fatal gas—the savage Boss holding court among cracking pillars and gaping domes, the mutilated architecture of an extinct world—the march of the New Men, black steely figures, up the grass-grown streets of ruined Everytown—the shots of machinery—

World of the future

The opening passages of the film are realistic (and, consequently, unnerving); the middle is picaresque, with rescues and counterplots. The end seemed pure fantasy; its intention was (at least by me) forgotten in an amused delight of the eye. As the story marches on into the future, ever further from a present that we know as reality, it becomes more abstract. The material, at its outset, is the familiar; at its close, the unknown: then images have to be at once amazing and possible. In making sets for the future Mr. Vincent Korda had so much scope that he might well have lost his head. He seems to me to have kept it admirably. Size—as I said before—and a kind of inexorability make

the *mise-en-scene* of 2036 impressive. The dresses were less good—the padded togas for men, the women's cellophane haloes—and came dangerously near the sentimental and tawdry. The most future-like element in the 2036 sequences was the sound: a sort of sea-shell humming inside the galleried, shadowless white town. But unhappily there was again a good deal of talk. The people of 2036 seem at once smug and null.

Mr. Wells being a moralist, it is futile to quarrel with him on account of aesthetic flaws. If this film fully came off it might knock one flat; it does not fully come off because of a constant conflict between moral and poetic intention. It tries to be too comprehensive; its aims are confused. Mr. Alexander Korda has worked magnificently, but he, too, was perplexed, or allowed himself to be side-tracked. All the same, *Things to Come* is a film that grows in the memory. It should be seen for its rolling boldness, the excellence of its lighting, its naivety, its drama and the unforgettable beauty of some of the shots.

DR. R. G. CANTI — AN APPRECIATION

THE death of Dr. R. G. Canti has deprived the world of an outstanding pioneer in a new method of scientific research—the application of cinematography to the microscope. Dr. Canti was probably best known to readers of this paper as the producer of a series of remarkable and beautiful films dealing with the movements and behaviour of living cells but it should be emphasised that this was only one aspect of the scientific work of a most unusually versatile man. Before Canti turned his attention to the cinematograph, he had already worked on many different medical problems, and it was his interest in one of these, the effect of radium on normal and on cancerous cells, that provided the starting point for his film work.

Canti was at this time studying, in collaboration with the late Dr. T. S. P. Strangeways, the effects of radium on living cells growing outside the body in tissue culture. The movements of the cells in these cultures proved so sluggish, and the effects of radium appeared so slowly, that it was necessary for the observers to spend many hours with their eyes glued to the microscope. This was a very trying business and the fatigue was so great that it soon became obvious that some new method must be evolved. It occurred to Canti that by taking a series of photomicrographs on a cinematograph film at relatively long intervals and subsequently projecting the film at normal speed it should be possible to speed up the movements of the cells to a rate such as the eye is used to and can appreciate. Moreover in this way an experiment lasting several days could be analysed in a few minutes. At first sight the designing of an apparatus to take such a film might seem relatively simple. In practice there are many technical difficulties and it was Canti's

unusually wide knowledge outside his own field of medicine, and his skill as a practical engineer, that enabled him to meet and overcome them.

The original apparatus was made largely by Canti with his own hands at his house in Hampstead and it was with this that almost the whole of his best known film *The Cultivation of Living Tissue* was made. Very few of the scenes of this were actually taken with the film itself in mind and in the main it was built up from material taken from various pieces of research in which Canti collaborated with several other workers. The film itself is of an educational nature and this shows that while Canti designed his apparatus primarily for research purposes he was fully alive to the application of his method in medical and scientific education.

The original home-made machine showed the method of micro-cinematography to have such promise that the British Empire Cancer Campaign had built at St. Bartholomew's Hospital the new apparatus, so competently described in a previous number of this paper, with which Canti made his more recent films. These include *Tissue Culture of Gliomata*, a film which shows the behaviour of cells grown from tumours of the human brain, a very remarkable film showing the development of the knee joint in the living leg skeleton of an embryo chicken, isolated from its nerves and muscles and from all connection with the body, and *Psittacosis Virus—a Study in Tissue Culture* which shows the growth, in the infected cells of an embryo chicken, of the virus of parrot fever.

Dr. Canti's cinematograph work had little more than started when he died and his death is a serious loss to research in this new and very fertile field.

J. O. W. Bland

SCISSORS MAKE FILMS

By Lotte Reiniger

Miss Reiniger, whose silhouette films are so well known, here describes how she started to make them and the technique she uses in their production.

SCISSORS play a very important part in the business of making films, and if it were not for the editor's merciful use of them, the audiences in the picture theatres would have a tiring time indeed. But you all know this by bitter experience, so I will not bore you by telling you again that cutting is one of the most essential parts of film work. What I wish to do is to describe to you my own little habit of producing films with scissor cuts made of paper. The editor of *SIGHT AND SOUND* thought that this would be of interest to readers, and so I will tell you my experience—and may it be a warning for everyone!

Two questions

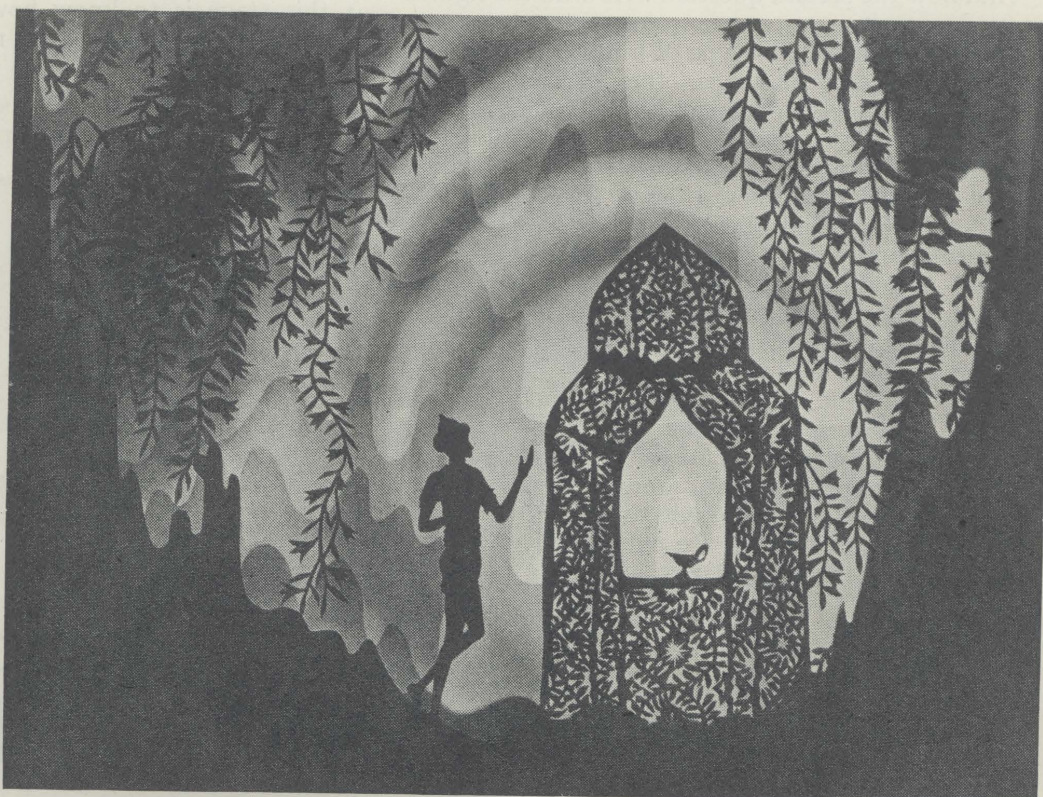
I will attempt to answer the two questions which I am nearly always asked by people who watch me making the silhouettes. Firstly: How on earth did you get the idea? And, secondly: How do they move, and why are your hands not seen on the screen? The answer to the first is to be found in the short and simple history of my own life. I never had the feeling that my silhouette cutting was an idea. It so happened that I could always do it quite easily, as you will see from what follows.

I could cut out silhouettes almost as soon as I could manage to hold a pair of scissors. I could paint, too, and read and recite; but these things did not surprise anyone very much. But everybody was astonished about the scissor cuts, which seemed a more unusual accomplishment. The silhouettes were very much praised, and I cut out silhouettes for all the birthdays in the family. Did

anyone warn me as to where this path would lead? Not in the least; I was encouraged to continue.

My first film

Now I was very fond of the theatre and acting. But performing plays in a small flat made rather a confusion, so it was a great relief to all when I began to use my silhouettes for my play-acting, constructing a little shadow theatre in which to stage Shakespeare. There was peace for a short time; then came the film. I had refused to learn a profession, and I now had one desire—to make films at all costs. This was a problem, but the fairies must have pitied me and helped me. At this time, Paul Wegener, a great actor and artist, was in Berlin. He produced a number of beautiful and unusual films, and his ambition was to utilise to the full the possibilities of the camera for the development of the film. His films *Student of Prague*, *Golem* and many others, were a guiding star for many artists in film production whose names have now become famous. Wegener saw me cutting silhouettes behind the stage in Reinhardt's theatre, and he became interested. He liked my silhouettes; he thought they showed a rare sense of movement. He therefore introduced me to a group of young artists who had started a new trick film studio. Here I first began to photograph my silhouette figures, just as drawings are photographed for the



From Lotte Reiniger's film *PRINCE ACHMET*



Another scene from
PRINCE ACHMET

When the story is ready, the music chosen, and the sound track recorded, then the work for the picture itself begins. Figures and backgrounds are laid out on a glass table. A strong light from underneath makes

cartoon film, and I was successful in making a film with my shadow figures.

This was in 1919, and the work was so interesting that from that time I have rarely done anything else. In the meantime I married one of the artists, and we started working together, as we have continued to do till the present time. That is my story.

Technique of production

And now the second question : How do the figures move ?

The technique of this type of film is very simple. As with cartoon drawings, the silhouette films are photographed movement by movement. But instead of using drawings, silhouette marionettes are used. These marionettes are cut out of black cardboard and thin lead, every limb being cut separately and joined with wire hinges. A study of natural movement is very important, so that the little figures appear to move just as men and women and animals do. But this is not a technical problem. The backgrounds for the characters are cut out with scissors as well, and designed to give a unified style to the whole picture. They are cut from layers of transparent paper.

the wire hinges, etc., disappear and throws up the black figures in relief, while the background appears as a more or less fantastic landscape in keeping with the story. The camera hangs above this table, looking down at the picture arranged below. By means of a wire contrivance the film in the camera can be moved one frame at a time. After the first photograph, the figures are moved into their next position, and the whole photographed again. And so on The important thing at this stage is to know how much to move the figures so that a lifelike effect may be obtained when the film is run through.

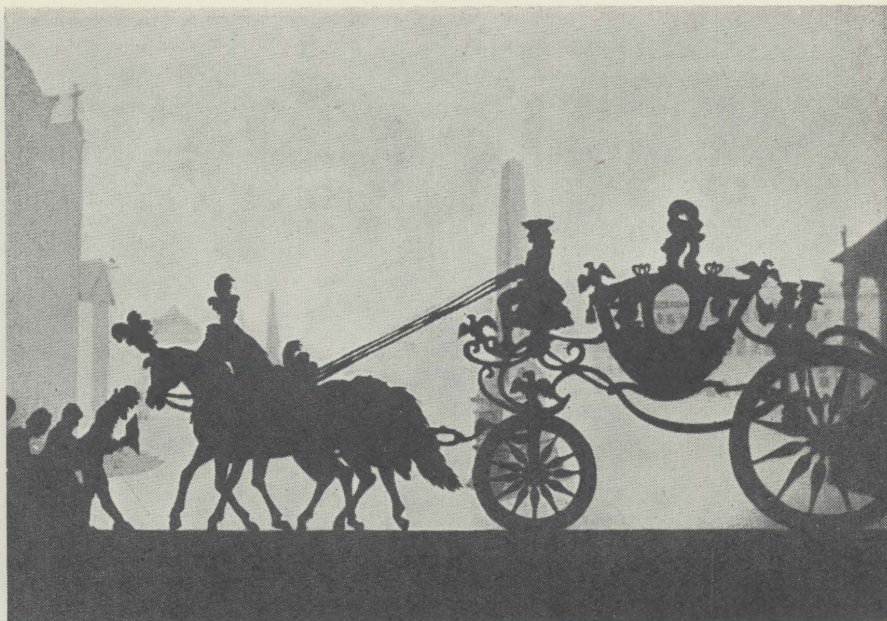
The synchronisation between sight and sound is secured by carefully measuring the sound track,



From PAPAGENO, by Lotte Reiniger

and preparing a very exactly worked out scenario, in which the number of shots are calculated according to the musical value. These calculations are the basis for the picture which is then painstakingly photographed.

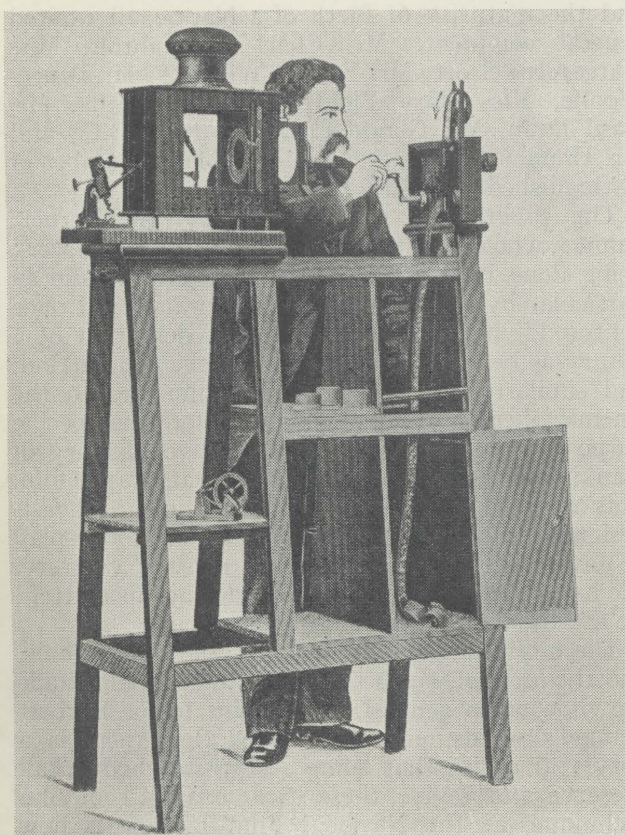
There remains a good deal to say about the artistic problems of this type of film, about its future and about its value. But I am content to leave these matters to those people whose profession it is to bother about such problems. I feel that I do better to concentrate on making the films—and on making as many as my good luck allows. Each new film raises new problems and questions, and I can only hope to live long enough to do justice to them all.



A scene from THE ROLLING WHEEL

THE LUMIÈRE CELEBRATIONS

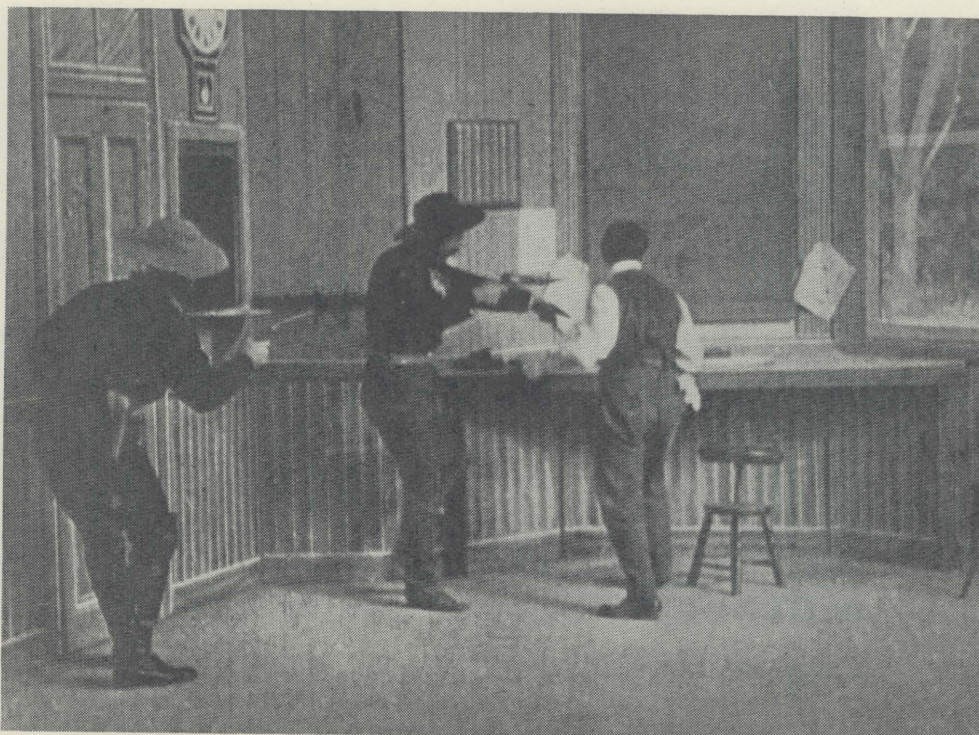
ON the 20th of January, 1896, M. Louis Lumière gave at the old Polytechnic the first commercial film display ever given in this country, and on the



The first moving pictures were shown to the British public on this apparatus, now in the possession of Mr. W. Day

same day of this year he attended an anniversary of that occasion. It was, in fact, found possible to show copies made from some of his original films projected on his original projector. Appropriately enough this part of the ceremony was performed by Mr. Will Day, to whose enthusiasm the preservation of these important relics is due. Sir Kynaston Studd, President of the Polytechnic, took the chair. Mr. Paul Kimberley made a presentation. Mr. Cecil Hepworth kept up a very informative and amusing commentary on the films shown—a selection of early films followed by a few sequences from recent successes.

One general impression was respect for the photographic quality of the early films. Moreover, most of the audience found themselves laughing with, and not at, the humour of the early comics. In this category the motoring film produced by Mr. Hepworth himself, in the days when cars were regarded as explosive, was particularly appreciated. In the modern masterpieces one couldn't help sensing the loss of that first fine careless rapture. The lunch given in M. Lumière's honour by the British technicians was attended by a representative assembly and was much enlivened by Dr. Leslie Burgin's delightful speech. A feature of the anniversary was a display of apparatus at the Polytechnic. Here were many of the earliest machines and some of the latest. Mr. Will Day had loaned for the occasion many of the most precious items in his collection, including some films taken by Friese-Greene in 1889. Sub-standard sound-on-film projectors were much in evidence in the present-day section. The future was represented by the Vinten 17.5 mm. television camera made for the Baird Co.



The opening scene of
THE GREAT TRAIN
ROBBERY (1903), one
of the films in the
National Film Library

CINEMA 1896-1915

FROM LUMIÈRE TO D. W. GRIFFITHS

UNDER the title of "Cinema 1896-1915: from Lumière to D. W. Griffiths" the National Film Library of the British Film Institute gave a first demonstration of early films from its collection on February 21st at the Polytechnic Cinema, Regent Street. The exhibition was arranged in connection with the Lumière celebrations organised by the Regent Street Polytechnic.

The programme was designed to illustrate the history of the silent film from the first public exhibition in this country to the advent of the feature film. Beginning with a selection of films first shown by M. Lumière in 1896, it passed on to *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), the first story-film of importance in the history of the cinema; *Island Maiden*, a characteristic example of the one-reel drama which predominated between 1903 and 1913; *Marcus Lycinius*, an Italian film anticipating the style of the great Italian spectacle films of 1913 (*Quo Vadis* and *Cabiria*); and concluded with Griffiths' *Birth of a Nation* which was the American reply to *Quo Vadis*, and which finally established the predominance of the full length feature film. Films illustrating the early work of Charlie Chaplin and Mary Pickford, some early news-reels and a John Bunny film were also included.

The enthusiasm of a large audience, expressed in frequent laughter and occasional applause, gave abundant evidence that a collection of film museum-pieces can be as enjoyable as it is valuable. The surprisingly good photography of the earliest films, the dramatic quality of *The Great Train Robbery*

and the maturity of *Birth of a Nation* all excited general comment. Mr. Charles Laughton, Miss Margaretta Scott, Mr. Emlyn Williams, Mr. Bruce-Woolfe, Miss Mary Field, Mr. Paul Rotha, Mr. Basil Dean, Mr. Gerald Cock, of the B.B.C., and Mr. Hannen Swaffer were among a large number of distinguished guests.

The programme was opened by Sir Herbert Samuel, who drew attention to the value of the work being done by the British Film Institute, and in particular by the National Film Library. "I once ventured," he said, "to suggest a definition of a library as being the collective memory of mankind, and similarly, in relation to the film and to the cinema, there is need of a library for this specific purpose, which shall be the collective memory of mankind in relation to the cinematograph film. This meeting to which you have come to-day is designed to promote that object and to display visibly before you the usefulness of such a library. We have a responsibility to posterity in this matter; we are the first generation of the cinema."

The interest of the audience at the Polytechnic, and the interest which the public and the film trade are showing in general, gives point to Sir Herbert Samuel's words, and emphasises that there is a very real desire that some responsible body shall preserve and revive these early examples of film technique, as the National Film Library is now doing. The success of the Library's first demonstration augurs well for the future success of its work as a whole.

THE FILM AND CIVIC EDUCATION

The film, with its rapid and vivid reporting of daily life, and its dramatic treatment of industry, science and commerce, can bridge the gulf between the theory of the classroom and the fact of the outside world. Mr. Baird here discusses how the film may thus become an important factor in the teaching of citizenship, and indicates what the G.P.O. Film Unit is already doing in this field.

By Thomas Baird, M.A.,
G.P.O. Film Unit

THE film has two functions in education. Till now its use in the classroom has been largely devoted to *illustration*. Its second function is one of *exposition*, wherein the film develops themes of its own making. Much experiment has been vitiated and much needless controversy has been roused through neglect of this essential distinction.

Use of the film in the curriculum

The conscientious and reflective teacher contends that he has quite enough straightforward teaching to do without occupying himself with every hare-brained scheme that comes along. If an addition to his work is proposed then he must be convinced that it is a necessary one. The business of teaching children to read, write, and calculate is a serious and exacting business. He is not, therefore, prepared to upset his time-table merely to satisfy the whims of the dilettante film enthusiast. Probably only *scientific* data provided by one or other of our research committees will provide conviction.

Allowing, as we must do, that our teachers do their job extraordinarily well, we must therefore guard against any unnecessary upheaval and consequent loss of direction and efficiency. Before we use films in connection with our curricular lessons, we must accept in a large measure the generally adequate curriculum, the normal conditions of the classroom and the normal teaching unit in the lesson.

These conditions immediately make certain demands on the type of film necessary. It must be such that the teacher can maintain the pace of his teaching; it must not appreciably slow down the teaching process. To maintain this pace the film must fit into the unity of the existing scheme of work. It is foolish to present a teacher with a gleaming projector and a 20-minute film of life in the Hebrides when he is patiently teaching the climate of Northern France.

What such a teacher wants to do is to use film in such a proportion as he at present uses maps and wall-pictures. When a diagram is required to crystallise an idea, the teacher turns to the black-board; when a conception of an object outside the experience of his pupils is needed he turns to a

wall map or switches on his diascope. Within the context of the lesson it is logical to use the film after the same fashion as *illustration*. For this, a film of not more than three minutes is much to be preferred to a twenty-minute film. The longer film would occupy half the lesson, which is absurd if the teacher is to maintain the pace of his teaching. With the shorter film he would be able to supply the necessary illustration at the appropriate point and yet cover at least as much ground as formerly.

Glasgow Education Committee have emphasised this need and have already organised production of two-to-three minute films, each dealing with one specific point and each designed to fit the normal lessons of the curriculum. According to this conception the essential illustration film should consist of short, almost unrelated shots which find their only context in the lesson.

The exposition film

The exposition film, the educational film as we know it, whether silent or sound, is in itself a unity, and within the context of its own making adds to knowledge and presents new experience. The possibilities inherent in this new form of presenting experience have not, to any extent been developed. Rather it has been forced to do the work which should more properly be done by a more simple illustration film.

The exposition film has a foreground use, in so far as it lines up with the curriculum. But it transcends the function of mere illustration as it commences to show the perspectives which lie behind the classroom and behind the laboratory. Professor Huxley's films are an example of this. In school, biology is not usually treated as an exact science. It is taught rather in its broader issues and at the point where it joins issue with other sciences. Cinema, with its peculiar ability to gather up individual instances and weave them into a pattern which is identified as much with the aim as with the instance, allows the film first to line itself with the particular instance and then to go beyond the instance to the general idea. The *Earthworm* for example, provides an instance of a dissection beyond the ability of most teachers; but it does more than this. It presents via a single instance the whole



CARGO
FROM
JAMAICA,
G.P.O. film
directed by
Wright

spirit of the biological approach and method.

The exposition film also proves valuable in connection with the creative work of the curriculum subjects.

It has been pointed out by many teachers that the quality of essay writing appears to degenerate in pupils about 15 years of age. It is not so much that they have less to say, but that their observations are less well expressed. There is a spontaneity about the compositions of ten year olds which is lacking in those of older pupils.

This disparity may be attributed to two causes.

In the efforts of the younger pupil there is little endeavour to achieve style or even order; despite the teacher's efforts, commas and full stops mean very little to the child. He goes gaily on his way writing as he speaks, in one continuous unpunctuated stream, only deterred from fullest expression by the labour of writing and his hesitancy in spelling. The older child on the other hand divides his attention between the ideas and the expression. He attempts to organise his expression and is forced to curtail his thought within the bounds of his grammar and punctuation. In consequence the freedom of his thought is retarded and there is the lack of spontaneity which we have mentioned. But quality is lost for another reason. At fifteen years of age an effort is being made by the pupil, not only to organise expression but also to organise thought.

Each day new ideas and new impressions are pouring in on him. His mental agility is being taxed to keep clear his leading lines of thought. He endeavours to appreciate things in a coherent pattern but all the while new and apparently unconnected impressions are crowding in on him. His thought patterns demand continual readjustment; yet during this period he is required to express in essays and in speech these very patterns. There is consequently strain in this business of tying down in static terms, what is in constant flux; he is asked to express in ordered form what is essentially unorganised in his mind. But cinema in virtue of its singular exposition value has just the required power of organising observation. The camera selects and intensifies, the director clarifies and relates, and the total observation is presented as a coherent unity. The film can present not the fleeting unrelated impressions of normal observation but a dramatised thought pattern. It is an aid to such coherent thinking as ordered expression depends on.

Beyond the curriculum

These values of the exposition film permit it to play a part in education which does not allow of strict alignment with the curriculum. When the cinema is considered as a new instrument of observation, possibilities hitherto denied to the educator, avenues of new experience, which till now have been closed to the classroom approach, open up. What

the cinema can do, as no other medium is able, is to provide an enhanced experience of the real world in the living terms of that world. As the telescope can bring the stars down to earth and the microscope can bring the microcosm into our view, so the cinema can report the living contemporary facts to the schoolroom. For the first time the schoolmaster can teach from the actuality.

One of the vitiating factors in educational practice has been the gulf between the educational process and the social process. Always the teacher (and he would readily admit it) lags behind the moving events of contemporary life; in his isolated classroom he is sorely tried to keep abreast of the everchanging tide of affairs. The nature of the cinema and its ability to report the contemporary observation can to some extent bridge the gulf.

During the past year the G.P.O. Film Unit has directed some of its exhibition work to this end. Series of film displays have been given to adult audiences in provincial centres and with the co-operation of Directors of Education special displays have been given to over one hundred thousand schoolchildren throughout Scotland and England. In these latter cases the story of communications has been taken into the school hall or the classroom, and has there been allowed to tell its own story. The aim has been, not to line up with the curriculum or to supplement the work of the geography master

or the science master, but rather to provide a vital complement to their work. By presenting the real world in a dramatised unity of the film's own making, part of the civic pattern is brought to life—and in the inter-relations of the scheme thus presented the ultimate intentions of the science, geography and history of the classroom are revealed.

Towards citizenship

Thus we see the film transcending its simpler illustration applications to curricular subjects, and becoming a means of directing the technique for the teaching of Citizenship. Civics has often degenerated into a study of municipal data and statistical evidence, or been represented as a development of economic history. In both these cases it has tended to become academic and merely dull. When it has grown out of political history it has retained its political emphasis and never gained contact with the social aspects of our life which, more than the political ones, are the bases of our civic life.

But the film with its rapid and vivid reporting of daily life, and its dramatic treatment of industry, science and commerce, brings the romance of the real, which is the foundation of teaching in Citizenship, right into the school. Thus the gulf between the theory of the classroom and the fact of the outside world tends to be bridged. This is the chief contribution the cinema can make to education.

WEATHER
FORECAST,
G.P.O. film
directed by
Evelyn Spice



Blocks kindly lent by Messrs. Faber & Faber



A scene from Charlie Chaplin's MODERN TIMES

(United Artists)

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By Alistair Cooke

THIS is the time of the year when critics find themselves suffering from seasonal prostration, or second-wind cynicism. After six months' interne work in smoky cinemas, ministering to this sinking patient, dissecting that corpse, the smell of spring is no joke. It only tantalises you with the reminder that there is outside a real world (*pace* Hitler, Mussolini, the Naval Conference, and the Defence Programme) where sanity may come from a glimpse of crocuses, where the box-office formula for gaiety may be no more than a seat in Hyde Park and cost a million dollars less than any Hollywood knows. But it's still a world you will know nothing of for four more months. If the reader detects a gleam of malice in the turn of too many sentences, let him remember that a critic's spite is sharpened by the constant recollection that Hollywood had last year 3,002 hours of the sun its bad works keep him from.

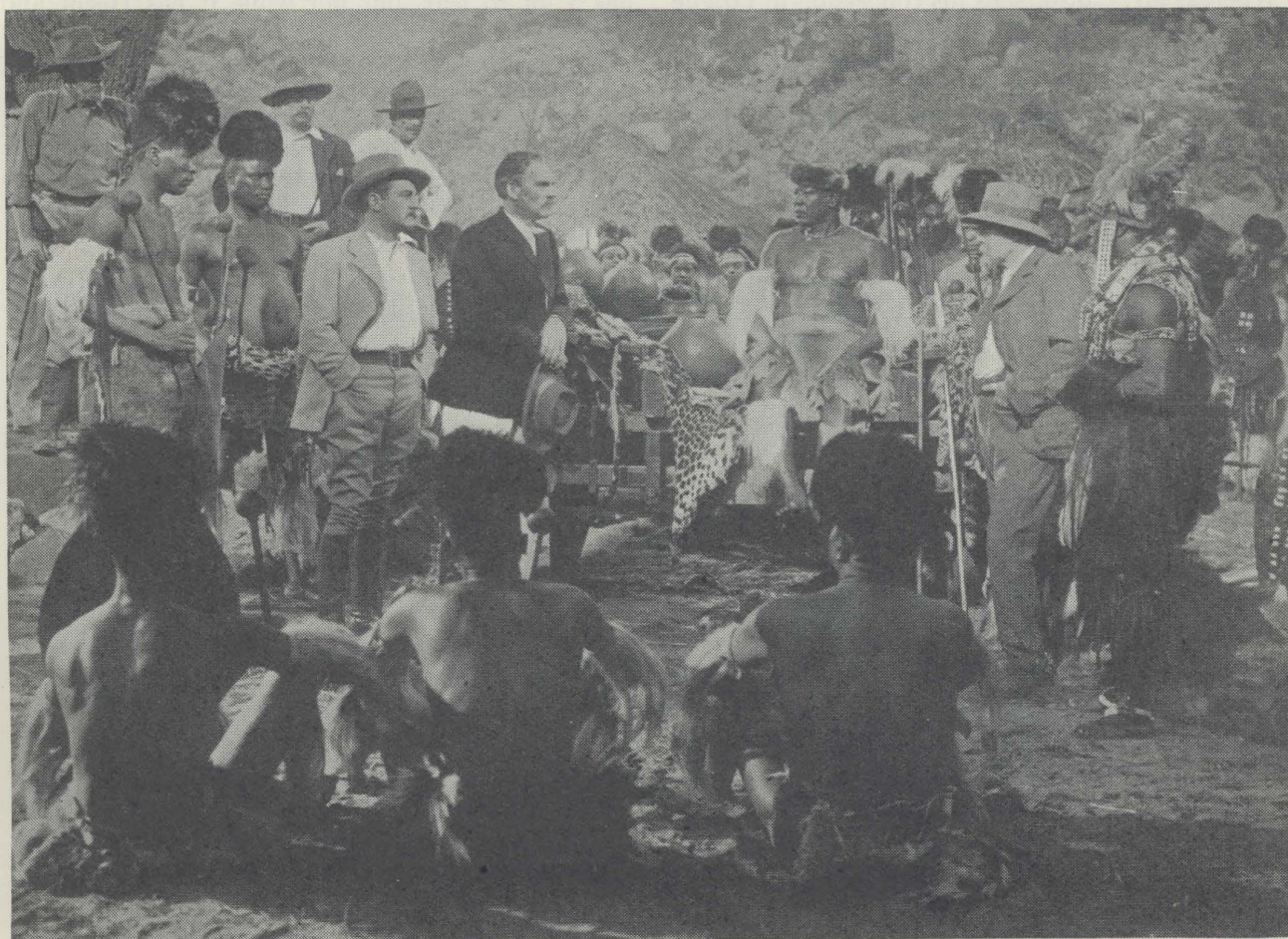
There is some compensation in knowing that this has been the Funny Men's quarter. We have had

them all—Chaplin, Lloyd, the Marx Brothers, Eddie Cantor, all except Fields who is, thank Heaven, now almost recovered from a grave and once hopeless illness. After as pretentious a build-up as the next war, the Chaplin film disappointed as much as that will if it is fought with bow and arrow. That disappointment would certainly be an enjoyable experience in itself, but before we get there most of us will be in hospital from anticipatory nerve diseases. By the time the critics finally got the film shown to them, at the most jittery press show on record, they were babbling so pitifully about "satire," "machine civilisation," and the other neural incantations, that when it was all over nobody knew what it was about. For most of them the notice they'd thought of writing a year ago was as good as any other. And now the general public, besides suffering from the general neurosis, has to climb through volumes of conflicting rubbish in order to see the film straight at all. Its innate fault, that of clumsy and uncertain continuity, is

due I think to Mr. Chaplin's courageous departure from pathos. For he knows no better continuity than the moments of fantasy generated by pathetic incidents. And here there are none. The idea to develop beyond the frustrated clown was a worthy one, but it demanded the repression of the instincts he works by. It had to be given an air of smoothness and efficiency by a production strangely foreign to the rambling Chaplin studio. And *Modern Times* has to be seen three times before one can first get used to, then discount, the symphonic luxury of the music and production. There is no discounting hurried and uneven direction (though Mr. Joseph Breen, who deleted six sequences at the last moment, may have much to answer for). But untamed behind all the lavish scoring are a few vagrant Chaplin tunes, and untailored through all the over-dressed production is the pantomimist himself, energetically nose-thumbing his own incongruous prosperity, sharpening the old marvellous gestures with a new Latin flipness, his mercurial body scribbling through the piece like a caricaturist's pencil through an album of photographs.

A Night at the Opera had every virtue that *Modern Times* lacked. Beautifully and carefully built by George Kaufmann, pruned by a preliminary

road-tour on which the perceptive Harpo kept a critical notebook, it came sprucely to Hollywood without the old cluttering of irrelevant whimsy, without having to snatch gags from the air to fill in ninety minutes. And of course in London, the absurd Marxian cult liked it not at all. Bloomsbury and Mayfair will never forgive Groucho for demonstrating, once for all in *A Night at the Opera*, that his middle name was never Salvador. "Those who know their Marx Brothers," they said, "will recognise an inferior work." In which case, the other 127,000,000 Americans must be wrong. The cultists here have always thought that their best gags had a unique quality of unattached whimsy. But the Marx Brothers are not unique. They are a thousand American comedians brought to the boil. And their dialogue always has a pointed application (Bloomsbury, unaware of the institution being parodied, takes refuge in calling it surrealism). As here most exquisitely in the contract scene, which would be better called the saloon scene (with an unconscious tenor as the brass-rail), in the parody automobile accident with two trunks (*Groucho*: "Hit-and-run driver, eh?—just look what you've done to that fender!"). The operatic fill-ins are dull enough, but we had to take a rest somewhere and only Fields of the screen comics



Walter Huston as Rhodes in *RHODES OF AFRICA*, by Berthold Viertel

(G. B. D.)



A scene from the **MILKY WAY** with Harold Lloyd, by Leo McCarey (Paramount)

The worst of the American films has been **Soak the Rich**, most "colossal" **Mutiny on the Bounty**, and the best **Ah, Wilderness**. The much-championed rebellion of the Messrs. Hecht and MacArthur becomes increasingly trivial and increasingly reactionary. The latest effort is a shabby, amateur little cynicism about radicalism on the campus.

can spread his stuff carefully enough to dispense with the need for rest intervals. Chaplin's sentimental heroines are no less desperate bolsters against fatigue.

Whereas Mr. Cantor sells his concession in fatigue directly to the box-office and the Goldwyn girls and the writers of torch-songs. In **Strike Me Pink**, it is hard to know which is comedy and which is recovery. Mr. Cantor has trusted too much to that put-upon look in the first half of the film. And the best of the film is a couple of situations which did not need Mr. Cantor's specific talent. One needed anybody and Edward Brophy, and the other needed only a trick photographer and an alive editor. Both situations received their due, and their reward in mad laughter. The Harold Lloyd film made one situation the whole film, asked for more acting than Lloyd has ever known, but threw Adolphe Menjou into brilliant, bewildered relief.

The authors' low trick is to offset vacuous socialites with morons (handpicked) to represent the socialists. By comparison, the said socialites appear about as civilised and amiable as life can be. Hollywood has a lot to fear, but not while it has Hecht and MacArthur on the sidelines.

Mutiny on the Bounty took two years to make, was originally fifteen times its projected length, was conceived as an epic and cost a fortune. And it still remains a good film. I'm afraid its only practical effect on the history of film may be to give to other studios the hint that sadism is now an indispensable box-office ingredient. But it

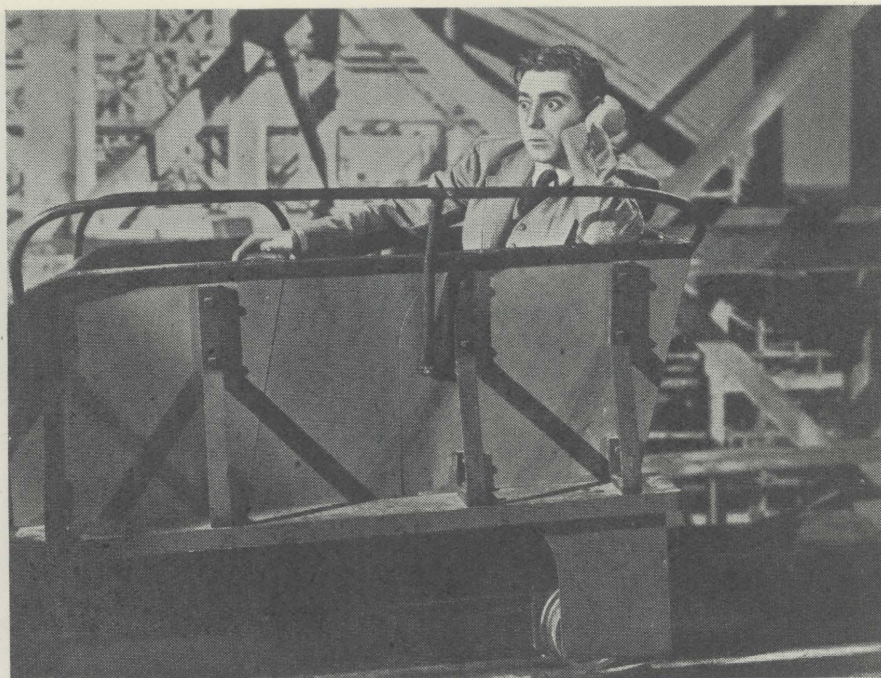


The Marx Brothers in **A NIGHT AT THE OPERA**, by Sam Wood (M.G.M.)

Eddie Cantor in **STRIKE ME PINK**,
by Norman Taurog (United Artists)

could boast the temporary triumphs of a strong even tempo, a decisive performance from Charles Laughton, much artful glorifying of the ship by Arthur Edeson's camera, and several Captain Bligh Editions of *The Times*.

King Vidor has again confessed, in *So Red the Rose*, that his gifts are sprawling into lushness, yielding to the pure sentimentality his early observation of people (*vide The Crowd, Street Scene*) helped him to resist. He admittedly took his cue from Stark Young, who wrote the book. It seems hard enough nowadays for any American to think about that mythical old South without moaning a mammy song and reaching for a mint julep. Certainly King Vidor, presented with a theme which must sometimes make a great movie, must have been too blinded by tears to see a fact, and he turned a deaf ear even to the right music. But New England, even after *Little Women*, has somehow managed not to turn into a Christmas card. It's still a place where people live (or used to) and it has always been eminently screenable. Clarence Brown, who is in the myth business himself (remember the Russia of *Anna Karenina*), has taken his spring



vacation with Eugene O'Neill and in *Ah, Wilderness* they wander back with never a false step into a Connecticut of thirty years ago. It must be O'Neill's script and the tender authenticity of his dialogue that give it undeniable distinction. Yet in retrospect Brown is never mawkish, is more than ingenious in the graduation scene, is neat and economical with the big scene of the play, a dinner table conversation that might have grown woolly in the screen version. And the acting of, especially, Eric Linden and Lionel Barrymore save Wallace Beery from the woeful emphasis he receives from being in the film at all, or even from the shock we receive at finding him within bellowing distance of Connecticut.

The best of the Continental films have been *Sans Famille* and Sacha Guitry's *Bonne Chance*. (I suppose under this heading I should say the most entertaining, but I've never been able to work out what is the difference between entertaining films and



Laurel and Hardy in *A BOHEMIAN GIRL*, directed by J. W. Horne and Charles Rogers (M.G.M.)

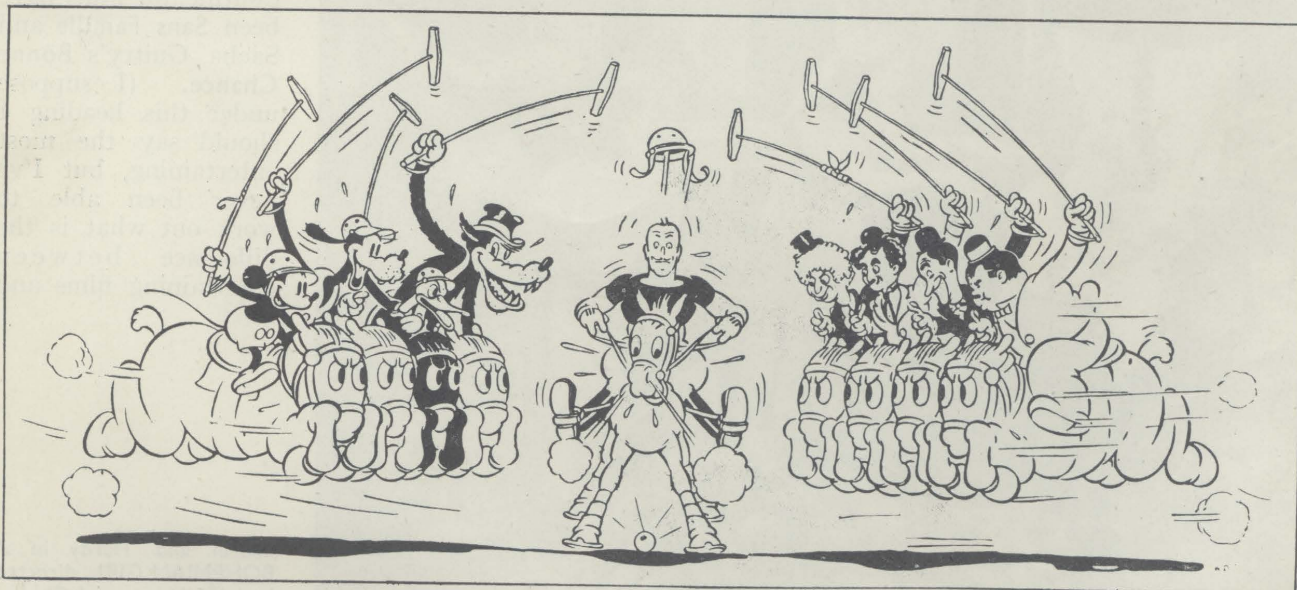


A scene from **THE AMATEUR GENTLEMAN**, by Thornton Freeland, with Elissa Landi (United Artists)

good ones.) The first had to withstand some pretty confident scorn from the more sophisticated patrons of the Academy, who turned silly with laughter at the idea of a Frenchman playing an English policeman. Needless to say, the policemen were three times as good as our own film Frenchmen, stage Irishmen, and at least five times as plausible as English vaudeville tumblers trying to pretend they are something very remarkable back on Broadway. Decidedly unfunny, and a knock-out blow for any native director who has ever thought about probing the East End, was the French idea of a thieves' kitchen in those parts. It was brilliantly played, directed with a venom of detail and verisimilitude that I doubt very much any English

look through a lens and never from an auditorium.

The British films this quarter are a proud and, on the whole, a creditable lot. After a good-looking, but dull, first appearance with *The Amateur Gentleman* and *Koenigsberg* (which were at least smoothly made), our cinema sounded an air-raid warning and *Things to Come* droned and thundered into our ken. There has been a lot of wrangling about this film. I have done my share and maintain that the acting would be creditable in Madame Tussaud's, the dialogue is pre-war (that little 1914 affair) and that the social psychology is crude materialism. But Vincent Korda and Georges Périnal between them have created at least a half-hour of a world that remains, as a patriotic poet said about an



From **MICKY'S POLO TEAM**, a recent Disney cartoon

(United Artists)

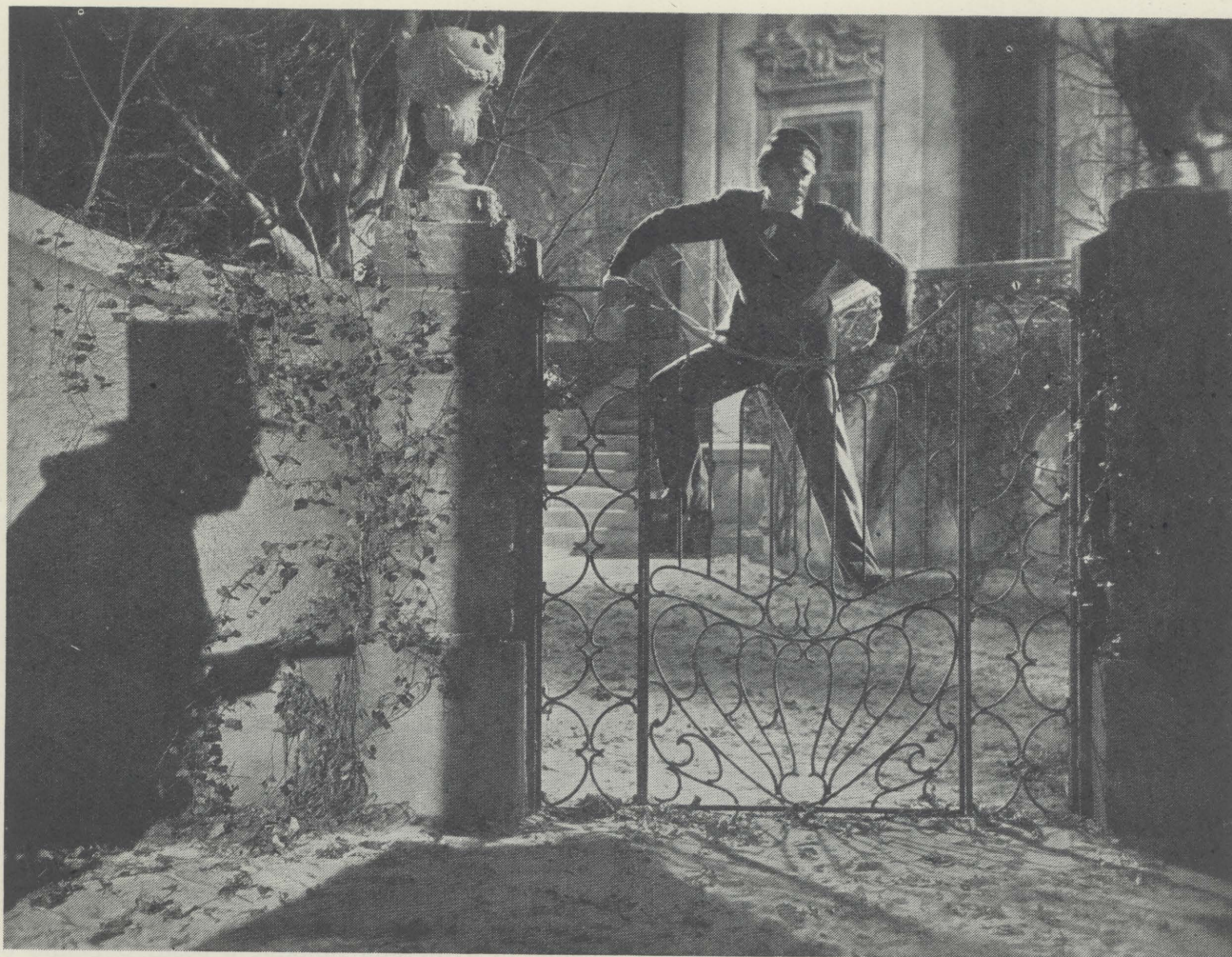
Aline MacMahon, Wallace Beery and Lionel Barrymore in *AH, WILDERNESS*, directed by Clarence Brown

(M.G.M.)

earlier world, "a shining thing in the mind." I don't know what that means, but that makes it all the more apt for *Things to Come*, which doesn't mean much that is profound but sounds tremendous and looks a million dollars—or more. Its faults are defections from the standards we film critics carry round with us waiting to fire off at the first adult film that comes our way. There have been not more than a dozen or so in twenty years, and it may be some compliment to *Things to Come* to say that it at least gets our hand on the trigger. A better film, whose ambition is comparatively microscopic, but not so unlike the other as you might think, is the Wright-Grierson documentary *Night Mail*. For the first time it makes documentary film as careful and thorough a document as the best written journalism as, say, *Fortune's* current pieces on Families on Relief. I have seen documentary films that looked like headmaster's reports, and others that would have gone better on to cigarette cards. But in *Night Mail*, Grierson (I suppose) respects the intricacy of the job that is to be done and Wright by a fine swinging movement and dramatic editing receives the information in one hand and "takes it away" into enchantment with the other, the camera hand. Not much below the first class of historical films, and the only British one I can recall that is sensible and decent in retrospect, is Berthold Viertel's *Rhodes of Africa*. For one thing, it makes our more sober English

tempo of living and thinking a positive quality of the film instead of a drag on a hurrying plot; for another, it balances the sympathy between the opposite sides not as fairly as *Time* or *Providence* will, but at any rate as evenly as you could expect from a protagonist. All the performances have some sort of charm, and even bad editing cannot mar the sense of proportion which kept the South African outdoor scenes objectively in long shots.

There is no end to a quarter other than the films you've seen. But in the dying moments of this critic's quarter came *Desire*, in which Frank Borzage's direction has been trimmed and polished by a Lubitsch in his best form since *Trouble in Paradise*. That is a strong sentence, and it was meant to be. After the tribe of knockabouts, gagmen, wisecrackers, the purveyors of "smart" comedy, Mr. Lubitsch's picture is like—I almost said—a breath of spring. It's not that, but it makes this indoor confinement less painful. For to the strong light the trees and the mountains of southern California (here called Spain, so that the audience may admire aloud with fewer misgivings) is added a sure, beautifully written piece about the usual Lubitsch trifles, about crooks and fake countesses breathless before the dawn of romance. Somehow Mr. Lubitsch's style has regained enough strength to make this stuff take on a vintage body long after the captains of industry and the kings of jazz depart.



From *STUDENT OF PRAGUE*, directed by Arthur Robison, to be shown at Studio One

CONTINENTAL FILMS

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

THE establishment of a new first-run Continental House in Oxford Street suggests that despite (or on account of) differences of language and viewpoint the continental film retains its hold upon the public it has attracted. Wherever possible, we are informed, Studio One will endeavour to provide its patrons with films of universal appeal; and as an earnest of this intention the theatre opened its doors on March 7th with *Veille d'Armes*, featuring Annabella. This was a choice calculated to perplex neither the intellect nor the emotions—a soundly-produced, soundly-acted French melodrama, including in its course a naval battle and a Court-Martial, at the end of which the heroine gallantly compromises her own honour in order to clear her husband's. Some may remember the story: it originally appeared here in 1918 as a play.

In *Veille d'Armes* the enemy nation is a fictitious one; but in *Second Bureau*, also from France,

names are given without attempt at subterfuge, although the action takes place in peace-time. A handsome French spy and a beautiful German one are the principal protagonists, and the scene of intrigue shifts from one country to the other—sometimes with confusing results. Such frankness of designation may disturb our more diplomatic minds, but there is no doubt that it makes for greater realism; and as we all know by now, melodramatics in the foreground inevitably demand a realistic background to set them off. Incidental characters wearing swastika armbands curiously increase conviction.

Robert Lynen, who won our hearts so successfully in *Poil de Carotte*, comes to us again in *Sans Famille*, the most naïve and unsophisticated of children's tales. A wicked uncle, a long-lost heir to an aristocratic title, and a series of unbelievable coincidences, make up the dish. There is also a

strikingly Gallicized London, which should offer suitable warning to those English directors who have hitherto thought it unnecessary in their films to make any distinction between national characteristics. But one would prefer to see Robert Lynen in something better fitted to his talents.

There are yet two other French films in the quarter's count—one more in all than the whole remaining body of continental importations. Whether or not this point is significant may be left for the wise to judge. The two are *Bonne Chance*, a Curzon confection of more note than most, and *Jofroi*, a comedy of rustic manners, seen at the Film Society: Vincent Scotto, who wrote the music for both, takes the name-part, with effect, in the second. *Bonne Chance* is Sacha Guitry: he is scenarist, director, and leading actor, and is on the screen for practically the whole time. His performance is cunningly and accurately keyed—what one refers to as a *tour-de-force*—and he is nicely supported by his wife, acting opposite him, and the minor members of the cast. If this is in any sense a prelude to a more considerable work, we await it with interest. *Jofroi*, delightfully photographed in a village near Marseilles, is happily neither lyrical nor moody. Its peasants are not Sons of the Soil, but natural characters in a natural setting, watched over concernedly, and with a proper appreciation of the gravity of his duties, by the Curé to whom they bring their troubles for arbitration. Even death is allowed to enter naturally and gracefully, without spurious sentiment—an unusual feat, and worthy of remark. One is a little hesitant, however, to recommend the film's thoroughgoing dependence on dialogue: it seems certain that an imperfect understanding of French would lend to the movement an inordinate air of slowness.

From Germany comes only *Reifende Jugend*, a *soi-disant* "psychological study" of adolescence, which deals with the romantic complications caused by the presence of three girls in a boys' school, and achieves most of the errors of mood which *Jofroi* so signally avoids. A thick layer of sentimentality covers the whole piece. Austria sends us *Hohe Schule*, alternatively titled "The Secret of Cavelli": the secondary title gives perhaps a better idea of its faintly outmoded style. Rudolf Forster never permits us to forget that he is acting; and although the development of the main plot is handled

with competence, the whole affair is obviously manufactured to an artificial formula. In several ways the attitude implicit in this film reminds us of *Sans Famille*.

From Austria, too, is *Die Ewige Maske*, an introspective account of a young doctor's temporary lapse into insanity after the loss of a patient whom he has been treating with a forbidden serum. The film is seriously conceived, the hospital-sequences are less showy and a good deal more carefully reconstructed than is customary, and the action is conducted throughout at a slow tempo and with a feeling of deliberate restraint. Often, indeed, the voices are so low that they can hardly be heard. The weakest points are where the film attempts to convey the sense of madness by means of pictorial impressionism. Here it never does more than scrape the surface, and one is led to the belief that a theme of this sort, however genuinely undertaken, cannot (is "cannot" too strong a word?) be transformed into adequate screen-material. Properly speaking, it requires to be treated at tremendous length and with every kind of circumstantial detail: a few sweeping and unrevealing passages of impressionism are not enough.

Soviet Russia's single contribution to our list is Lev Kuleshov's *The Great Consoler*, made in 1933. Severely propagandist, historically unconfirmable, it is based on incidents supposed to have occurred during the imprisonment of O. Henry—an author now much in favour among the Soviet public. Technically, the production is inferior; and Kuleshov's reputation as one of the first Soviet film-workers to have abandoned theatricalism makes the static, wordy, extremely theatrical nature of his present effort doubly remarkable. There is a measure of imagination behind the threefold division of the subject, and in the idea of heightening the tragedy by the contrast of slapstick (in these surroundings its purpose is exactly opposite to that of "comic relief"); but in practice these methods give the continuity an appearance of obscurity and maladjustment rather than precision. Yet so universal and powerful is the theme—of injustice and oppression—that those blessed with enough patience or sense of duty to see the film to the end found, after all, that the film did leave a mark: a mark, after a lapse of time, oddly more persistent than that left by any other of the films reviewed.

Directors and distributors of the films reviewed above are as follows:—

<i>Director.</i>			<i>Distributor.</i>
Veille d'Armes ...	Marcel l'Herbier ...	...	Not yet fixed; apply British Film Institute.
Second Bureau ...	Pierre Billon ...	...	Not yet fixed; apply British Film Institute.
Sans Famille ...	Marc Allegret ...	...	Reunion Films, Ltd., Regency House, 1-4, Warwick Street, London, W.1.
Bonne Chance ...	Sacha Guitry ...	...	Not yet fixed; apply British Film Institute.
Jofroi ...	René Pagnol ...	...	Film Society, 56, Manchester Street, London, W.1.
Reifende Jugend ...	Carl Froelich ...	...	Tobis Film Distributors, Ltd., 109, Jermyn Street, London, S.W.1.
Hohe Schule ...	Eric Engel ...	...	Reunion Films, Ltd.
Die Ewige Maske ...	Werner Hochbaum ...	...	Tobis Film Distributors, Ltd.
The Great Consoler ...	Lev Kuleshov ...	...	No longer available.



NIGHT MAIL, by
Wright and Watt
(G.P.O.)

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

NIGHT MAIL (British)

Production : Produced for the G.P.O. Film Unit by Basil Wright and Harry Watt, under the supervision of John Grierson

Sound : Sound direction by A. Cavalcanti; verse by W. H. Auden; music by B. Brittain

Photography : Jones and Fowle

Length : 2,115 feet

Distributors : A.B.F.D.

In contrast to the extravagant pyrotechnics of *Coal Face*, the greater restraint and simplicity of *Night Mail* come as a relief. Indeed, if it has been the function of the earlier film to demonstrate by its failings what cannot be done and ought not to be undertaken, then it has after all served an important purpose.

The theme of *Night Mail*—the nightly journey of the Post Office express from Euston to Glasgow, collecting and delivering letters and packages all along its route—is in itself sufficiently dramatic, and the documentary film-maker could ask for no better material. The most serious danger was that the producers might diminish the value of their subject-matter by a high-flown attempt at romantic impressionism; but, withstanding the temptation for the most part with admirable firmness, they have instead given us in essence a straightforward account (though necessarily sifted and simplified)

of actual things, employing technique not as an end but as a means.

Some of the photography is excellent: there are shots of the countryside in the glow of evening, and as the train flies past; and of the train itself, seen from a distance, and distinguished only by its lights from the darkness. The shots of collecting-apparatus at work are also neatly inserted. The natural sound-effects are agreeably realistic and have perspective, though one is a little doubtful of certain impressionistic background noises; and the commentary as a whole is informative, unpretentious, and evenly-spaced: quite unlike that of *Coal Face*, except in one brief but agonizing declamation of superfluous statistics. Criticism has been directed at the jog-trot rhymes recited towards the end in accompaniment to the rhythm of the train: whether or not one accepts them, or allows the semi-literary idea on which they are based more than an occasional validity, it must be acknowledged that in principle at least (if one omits the sentimentally-uttered concluding stanzas) they are here correctly formed; for they are easy to follow, they emphasize a rhythm clearly present in the picture itself, and they obscure nothing—moreover, they are presumably not intended to be profound.

The film's chief battle is with its continuity, the imperfect assurance of which is noticeable from

the opening shot. The producers rightly perceive the casual to be significant, but have not yet learnt to make it appear so—with the result that the film seems to straggle; and there is one distinct break, from an exterior to an interior sequence. The difficulties of introducing ordinary railway employees at work, and of recording their movements and voices without making both seem oddly colourless (particularly the latter, which at times seem positively disembodied) are the most obvious part of a comprehensive general difficulty inherent in the handling of natural material: the sequence on the station at Crewe makes the nearest approach to victory over these obstacles, and its cumulative effect is good.

There are other unsolved problems—such as that of producing a satisfactory effect of vibration inside a moving train. But the important point is that these problems are genuine, instead of being factitious. After the shiftings and turnings of certain recent G.P.O. films, *Night Mail* represents a decided step forward.

THE IMMORTAL SWAN (British)

Production: Immortal Swan Productions

Direction: Produced by M. Victor Dandr ; directed by Edward Nakhimoff

Length: 5,000 feet

Distributors: Immortal Swan Productions

Dances: The dances include The Weber Ballet and Weber Solo; Night, by Rubenstein; Californian Poppies; Ballet of Don Quixote; Greek Dance; Snow flakes; Variation Classique; Dragon Fly; Rondino (also in slow motion); The Dying Swan

Here is an Epitaphium Pavlovae, put together with the aid of a series of old film-strips and shaped into an appearance of unity by means of modern reconstructions. However certain the technical superiority of the modern sections, their value is never more than auxiliary; and one would willingly dispense with their more highly sentimentalized and artificial portions, which are sometimes sickly in the extreme. The virtue of the film rests simply in the records of Pavlova herself: tattered and faulty as are these aged scraps of

celluloid, the aura of Pavlova's personality, and the authenticity of their content, translate them subtly to a higher plane.

Various phases of Pavlova's life are exhibited to us in brief: her travels over the world; scenes at home in her Hampstead garden; and, most important of all, her dancing—much of this having been photographed, in continuous long-shot, in Mary Pickford's private studio at Hollywood. Of the general items, the one which makes the greatest impression is that which gives us Pavlova's voice, recorded at the time, as she is calling to her swans. This momentary advance towards a closer intimacy has much the same effect upon the mind as the elaborately-planned climax of Charlie Chaplin's song in *Modern Times* or as the King's voice heard on the radio.

The dances, the heart of the picture, fulfil adequately their primary function of reminiscence, and are bound to give pleasure to those who have seen Pavlova on the stage. Those, however, who know of her work only by report are to be warned against expecting too much from the material.



Pavlova as she appeared in her dance "The Dying Swan"

(Immortal Swan Productions)

Some of the prints date back ten years, and, quite apart from scratches, greyness, and such a point as the obscuring of parts of the dances by the present-day sound-mask, one observed that the old silent speed at which the dances were taken interfered with the smoothness of the movements and gave them a distinctly jerky air, preventing them also from synchronizing properly with the music. As a consequence, the two scenes which reproduce best are the pizzicato dance (which starts off with an evident jerkiness of its own) and the slow-motion version of the Rondino: the latter passage, for obvious reasons, is the most interesting part of the film.

The records as a group reveal the beautiful control which Pavlova exercised over her limbs, particularly the upper part of her body; and at times give us a curious impression of her as nothing but arms and legs, informed with an astounding agility. If the way in which the celluloid fragments have been pieced together cannot meet with our fullest approbation, the fact that the project has been undertaken at all must unquestionably win our gratitude.

DEATH ON THE ROAD (British)

Production : G-B. Equipments, in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport and in association with "The News of the World"

Length : 1,500 feet

Distributors : G-B. Distributors

The virtues or otherwise of propaganda as a motive for film-making have been much debated. Whatever we may think of the argument at large, this particular sample of propaganda—aimed at the lessening, by visual precept, of the tremendous number of road-accidents—can in its intention only command applause. But one could wish that the intention had been carried out with more spirit

and directness and less diffusion of energy. In such a film, with such a purpose, there can be no apology for the intrusion of personal mannerisms, or for anything but a plain, emphatic statement of the problem and its solutions. *Death on the Road* too often seems to miss its mark by straining over-hard after side-issues.

The film is constructed in loose, uneven snippets, without proper climaxes. Imaginary characters are brought in at the beginning, but they are easily recognizable as lay figures, with little life or individuality. The off-screen statistical reading to which we are treated further on, while something quite different is taking place before our eyes, makes only for confusion; and the symbolical flag-sequence should have been much clearer. As for the idea of incorporating scraps borrowed from other films, it is essentially a dull one: for those who happen to have seen *Citizens of the Future* the end of the present film cannot fail to lose any freshness or vitality which it might otherwise have had. Fortunately, there is at any rate one section which is set out with the correct lucidity—that in which Mr. Hore-Belisha's voice is heard expatiating on the causes of accidents, while the picture illustrates his points one by one. It is a pity that the whole film could not have been executed in the same forthright and unassuming manner.

THE GREAT CRUSADE (British)

Production : Pathe

Direction : Fred Watts in collaboration with William Gell

Length : 1,550 feet Distributors : Pathe

This again is propaganda—and again, in a sphere where the inroad of the moving-picture finds little but welcome. The Elton-Anstey film *Housing Problems* was the first rather than the last word on the subject; and the more comprehensive endeavours of *The Great Crusade*, showing us the degraded conditions under which human beings (paying penance for no sin but poverty), are compelled to live in all the great industrial centres of England, require neither puff nor excuse. As might have been foretold, those parts of the film are strongest which convey their message in the barest way: we need no contrast of green fields to make the point clearer, for the contrast is in our own daily



From *THE GREAT CRUSADE* (Pathe)

Kittiwakes, from NURSERY
ISLAND (G.B.I.)

environment, and in the other films which a cinema-programme is likely to contain. In these sections also the commentary, which does not start off too well, and of which there is at times too much, appears at its best.

The later portions of the film deal with the rehousing "five-year plan" now declared to be in progress, indicating the added employment involved by such a scheme in all branches of industry. New workers' housing estates are shown in several towns, including London; and these are effectively contrasted with the old. An attempt is made to convey the meaning of statistics (many are given) by pictorial examples—by showing the crowds at a football match, and by giving brief representative views of eleven British cities, the populations of which, we are told, are together less than the numbers of those who must eventually be removed to new homes: an illuminating attempt, suggesting a realization that the mere recording of statistics in commentary has little significance. The jingling musical accompaniment and the short acted sequence before the end are weak, but the film as a whole takes much the right direction; and it is difficult to recall some of the earlier, more explicit passages, without commiseration and anger. One's biggest objection is to the presence of what seems to be a Governmental bias. The mixture of social and political propaganda is in this case unhappy.

NURSERY ISLAND (British)

Production : G-B. Instructional

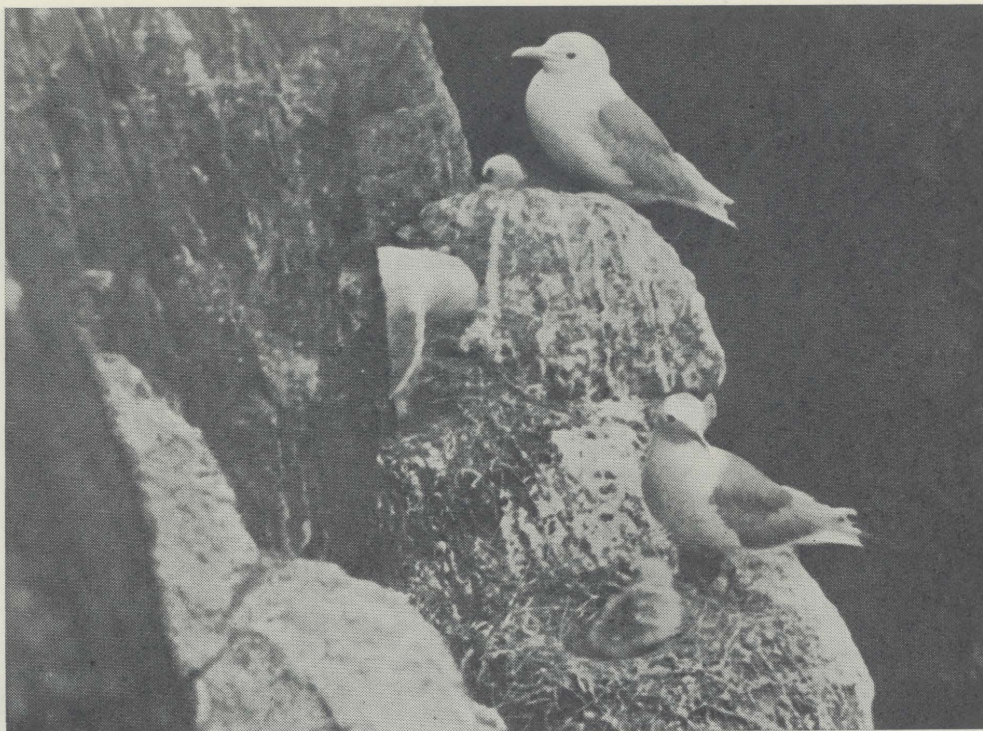
Direction : Mary Field

Photography : Oliver Pike

Length : 1,642 feet

Distributors : G-B. Distributors

This attractive study of sea-birds and their habits was filmed among the Farne Islands, south of Berwick. No single species monopolizes the attention of the camera, which offers us views at close quarters of terns, kittiwakes (whose cries, from which they derive their name, are added in the background), guillemots, gathered in dense formation on the rock-surface, cormorants, puffins with their odd-



looking beaks, eider-ducks—and gulls, the bogey-men of the islands, who not only serve to frighten the young of other species, but are led by their greed to devour the eggs of their own kind. Of human beings, little is seen. Apart from the cries of birds, the subdued noise of the sea forms a constant accompaniment.

Much naturally depends on the photography, which is frequently of a very high standard. The film has no precise construction, each episode giving way quite simply without adventitious aid to the next: it is difficult to know how any more positive mode of continuity could have been satisfactorily applied to the subject, particularly as the field covered is so varied. The end comes without any synthetic climax; and one wonders indeed what climax could have been imposed without falseness. The most noticeable signs of an editor's hand are in such easy transitions as those between shots of seals and of birds escaping in flight to safety—and between shots of a young tern, joyfully recognizing its mother, from which it has inadvertently strayed, and the mother in the air above. The commentary adopts a popular tone, but in idea it undeniably follows the right lines: largely allowing the incidents portrayed to speak for themselves, and rarely attempting more than simple annotation of the picture to which it is attached.

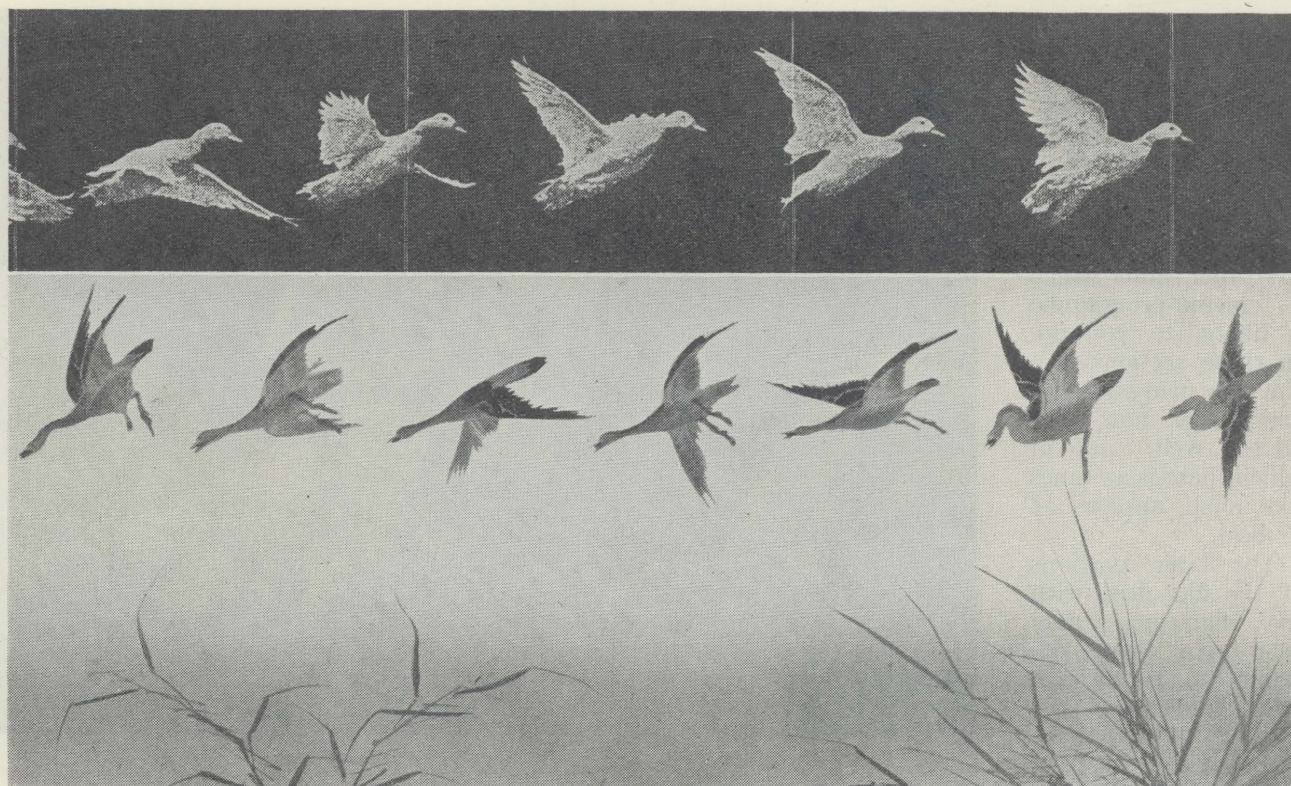
THE MARCH OF TIME (American)

Production : Sponsored by the American magazine *Time*

Length: Issue 5: 1,925 feet; Issue 6: 2,043 feet

Distributors : Radio

Six issues of *The March of Time* have now been shown on British screens: their success is reflected



Above : Marey's serial photographs of a wild duck in flight. Below : Section of Chinese painting "A Hundred Geese"
See paragraph "Art and Science" below.

in the rising sales of the periodical by which they are sponsored, and in the imitations of that periodical now to be found on our bookstalls. Considered otherwise than as first-class publicity for *Time*, they occasionally show less assurance. They are most at home with the narrower, more intimate events, where the necessary points can be demonstrated without a great deal of background explanation: in the Tennessee Valley item which opens the sixth issue, the work left to the commentary is excessive, and there is a danger of tiring the audience instead of making the subject clear. Commentary is interspersed with sub-titles: later in the same issue the sub-titles (appealing more directly to the mind through the eye) become relatively more frequent. Both in this month and the two previous ones there have been only three items, not four.

The fifth issue included the first British section, a lengthy discursus on the revival of British shipping. Partly, but not altogether, on account of the American commentary, it wore a slightly outlandish air; and in sum gave the effect of skimming resoundingly over an extensive surface rather than of plumbing deep. Our own documentary directors, it is understood, are being called in for the preparation of local material: the future tone of which may therefore be adapted to the requirements of a more phlegmatic public. One point may be noted in the British section, towards its close—namely, the presentation of comparative statistics in a short inserted title instead of in the flow of commentary.

ART AND SCIENCE

In the summer number of *SIGHT AND SOUND*, 1935, attention was drawn to the artistic interest of Marey's photographic records of human and animal motion to which modern cinematography owes so much. An example was reproduced showing a fencer lunging. It is, of course, a commonplace of observation that photographs taken for a scientific purpose may possess artistic beauty. It is also a commonplace that works of art may record facts which possess scientific interest. It is, however, not so easy to discover instances in which the overlapping between Art and Science has taken place at the same point, so that there is really a close resemblance between what one might call the art-diagram and the science-picture. A tolerably good example of this kind is, however, furnished by Marey's serial photographs of a wild duck in flight and the Chinese painting of "A Hundred Geese" reproduced herewith. Marey's photograph represents one bird in a series of positions and was obtained by exposing a fixed plate through narrow slits in a rotating disc. The whole plate was thus exposed every time a slot passed the lens, but since the bird was made to fly against a dark ground the plate received no impression each time except the image of the bird in its momentary position. As the bird was flying in a straight line the images on the plate succeeded one another in a straight line. Since it so happens that ducks and geese have the habit on occasion of flying in single file the successive photographs of one bird and the one painting of a flock of birds resemble each other in a striking fashion. Much of this resemblance may, of course, be discounted as being a mere coincidence, but there is also undoubtedly an inevitable relationship between the artist and the scientist in this sphere of illustrating animal life. The natural grace of many animal movements tends to awaken the artistic sensibilities of the scientist, while the artist has perforce to become an accurate observer of facts in order to possess himself of the raw material for his imaginative work.

H. D. W.

FILMS AND THE SCHOOL

A SECTION FOR TEACHERS

THE FILM LESSON

By E. Francis Mills, Demonstrator in Geography, London School of Economics

Last year Mr. Mills conducted an experiment on lines designed to give practical guidance to the teacher who uses films in the class-room and to the film producer. Mr. Mills here describes the experiment and indicates some of the conclusions reached. In a second article he will consider the form of the teaching film.

OF the various experiments so far undertaken to explore the use of the teaching film, most have had very wide aims and have been loosely controlled. The results obtained, being of a very general character, have given little practical guidance, either to the teacher who wishes to make the best use of the available films, or to the producer who wants to know precisely what kinds of film he should make.

Objects of the experiment

In July of last year, the author conducted an experiment with these two practical objects in view. It was considered that a small, but intensive investigation with strict scientific controls and delicate testing methods would yield more significant results. In the scope of a short article it is impossible to describe in detail the methods employed, but the experiment was so arranged as to eliminate all the variable factors excepting the two being tested, namely, the films themselves, and the types of film lessons, and only such brief description of the films and lesson types is given as is essential to a short discussion of the main results.

The "Regional Geography of the British Isles" series of sound films was chosen. They were recently produced for teaching purposes by G.-B. Instructional, Ltd., having an intermittent spoken commentary and lasting about ten minutes each.

From TOWN SETTLEMENT, one of the films used in Mr. Mills' experiment (G.B.I.)

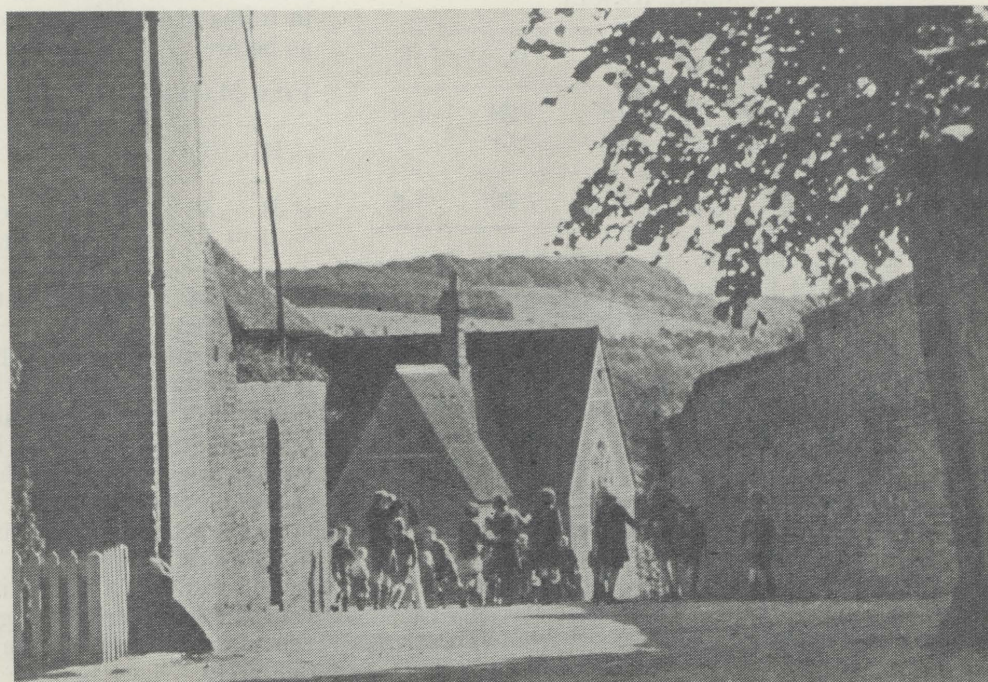
At the time of the experiment there were only four of this series available, and this restricted the comparison of the types of lesson to the four described below.

Types of lesson

The "O" type was an ordinary "oral" lesson with every classroom facility excepting the film. Used throughout with a control group, it allowed direct comparison with and among the types of film lesson.

The "R" type of lesson consisted of a film followed by a developing "recapitulatory" lesson. This was adopted as a standard type of film lesson and was used throughout as a second control.

The "Q" type was similar to the "R" except that, instead of the film starting the lesson, it was preceded by the teacher posing a "question" of principle which the pupils were asked to solve from the film; for example, for *Wheatlands of East Anglia* (reel 1), the children were told that the farmer, in growing wheat, had to consider two things, the nature of the plant, and the factors of the environment (soil, seasons, etc.), and they were then asked to find out from the film how the farmer had to work to get the best crop. The film was ultimately followed by the same kind of lesson as in "R" and "O."



The "L" type spread the film throughout the whole "lesson," the film being stopped to discuss a "still" or to develop the lesson step by step.

It was essential that the experiment should be conducted under classroom conditions. To this end, all the lessons were fitted into the ordinary forty-minute timetable, and the teacher operated the projector, lights, etc., unaided. Again, the lesson was essentially the teacher's own, the film being used as an aid. Thus, the teacher was free to use, ignore, or even contradict parts of the film and to introduce any other material just as it suited him to develop the thesis of his lesson. One essential control, however, limited his freedom to a small extent; for the lesson, once designed, had to contain the same material and treatment when given to each of the classes, the only variation being the lesson type, whether "R," "Q," "L," or "O."

Three new mixed classes were formed from the 14-15 age group in its third year of a School Certificate course at the "Sandringham" Central School, Forest Gate. They were arranged to be as nearly identical as possible, both in general ability and experience of learning geography. The boy-group or girl-group of each class either separately or together, had the same average and spread of intelligence as each of the other classes.

The tests consisted of many short and precise questions, and covered exhaustively every point of all the lessons. This involved a great deal of work, and besides giving excellent results, it allowed every fact and idea produced by each child to be separately tabled. These detailed statistics have given a severe test of the consistency of the results and allow all kinds of special analyses to be made.

Comparative results

The results which compare the lesson types are summarised in the following table:—

GENERAL RESULT

Lesson type	...	...	"R"	"Q"	"L"
Boys	...	...	+15	+28	+9
Girls	...	...	+14	+11	+7
Boys and Girls	...	...	+15	+19	+8

The figures represent the percentage increases of each type of film lesson over the corresponding "O" (oral) results. The bottom line is the average of the boys and girls, and shows the responses of the classes as a whole to the lesson types. To make the nature of the figures quite clear, the +15 under the "R" heading for boys is taken from 1.147 which is an average of the four figures: 1.256, 1.040, 1.125, 1.162. Each of these is the ratio of the boys' "R" result compared with the boys' "O" result for each film. Thus:

$$1.256 = \frac{406 \text{ ("R" score)}}{322 \text{ ("O" score)}}$$

for two lessons concerned with *Wheatlands of East Anglia* reel 1. Here the 406 is

the total of over fifty independent marks on topics included within the lesson. In considering the figures, it should be remembered that the lesson types did not differ in material or treatment, but only in the way in which the film was incorporated.

Two things stand out immediately. Firstly the "L" results, although 8 per cent. better than the "O" type, compare very unfavourably with the other types of film lesson. This is probably due to the confusion resulting from the many interruptions in the flow of the lesson caused when the projector and lights were abruptly switched on or off, a factor affecting the teacher as well as the child.

Secondly, there are the remarkably different responses of the boys and the girls to the "Q" type. This probably reflects the more logical and active tendencies of the boys and the more receptive attitude of the girls. It looks, indeed, as if the boys are only fully interested in the lesson when they have something to do (such as solving a problem), whereas the girls seem to prefer to absorb a mass of material *en bloc* and wait for the explanation (as in the "R" type).

A further analysis of the results throws considerable light upon their significance. As each lesson contained material introduced from two sources (the film and the teacher), two questions naturally arise: "How do boys and girls respond, and lesson types compare, when the film material ONLY is considered?" And again: "Does the film help or hinder the response of the pupils to other things the teacher may have to say on the subject?" In order to answer these questions, the separate marks for each of the points in each of the lessons were gathered together into two groups according to whether they were introduced by the teacher or by the film. It was found that approximately the same amount of material had come from each source. The figures in the following tables are in terms of the exactly corresponding "O" results, as before.

FILM MATERIAL.			TEACHER'S MATERIAL.		
"R"	"Q"	"L"	"R"	"Q"	"L"
+31	+39	+20	BOYS	-2	+22
+21	+17	+5	GIRLS	+3	+8
+25	+28	+12	Boys and Girls	0	+15

Considering the "Film Material" first, we have here a measure of the advantage of the combination of teacher and film over the teacher alone. These figures show the lesson types in the same comparative order as in the earlier table of "General Results," but, as might be expected, the actual advantages are greater, rising almost to 40 per cent. in the case of the boys' "Q" result.

The indication given in the "General Result," that the boys tended to get greater advantage from the film lessons than the girls, is here brought out definitely. The figures give an average of +30

Spinning, from HIGHLANDS OF
SCOTLAND (G.B.I.)

per cent. for boys and +14 per cent. for the girls, but this does not necessarily mean that boys get twice as much benefit from films as girls, for the results were not referred to the same oral result, but to the separate responses of the boys and the girls to the same material orally presented. The results probably indicate the extent to which the boys tend to respond better to active visual material and the girls to verbal presentation. This, however, is subject to further investigation.

The figures for the "Teacher's Material" are startling and explicit. One would not necessarily expect a film to help a child to appreciate material subsequently introduced. With the "R" and the "L" results there are no significant advantages or disadvantages, but with the "Q" type there is a considerable improvement for which the boys are chiefly responsible. One can only conclude that the children, having themselves tackled a problem "at first hand," were more interested in, and more qualified to follow the teacher's arguments to the solution of other related problems.

Of course, this experiment, conducted on such a small scale, and considering only one series of films,



one teacher, and three types of film lesson, cannot be more than an approximate and tentative guide to any general statement on the form of the film lesson. But it is hoped that it may be of some use as a finger post to the practising teacher, warning him of the dangers along the "L" path and encouraging him along the "Q" path, not only with proof of material improvements of the order of 30—40 per cent., but with a demonstration that the film can be used as a real educative medium, not merely by "bringing reality into the classroom," but by encouraging constructive thought on the part of his pupils and creating a more active co-operation in his subsequent teaching.

The author wishes to acknowledge with thanks the assistance he has received from the following:—

G.-B. Equipments, Ltd., for the loan of films and apparatus.

Mr. J. E. Pooley, B.Sc., of the "Sandringham" Central School for facilities at his school.

Mrs. E. M. Williams, M.A., of Goldsmith's College, for much helpful advice, especially on the statistical side.

Mr. C. Fitchett, B.A., for help in the marking.



From THE ART OF SCRAPER BOARD, a classroom film made by Cyril Jenkins

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FILMS

By R. E. Roper, M.A., M.Ed.

The British Film Institute recently gave a special demonstration of physical education films which was opened by Lord Derby. Considerable interest was aroused as a result of the demonstration and we print below an article by Mr. R. E. Roper, a member of the Physical Education Committee of the B.F.I., which gives an outline of the scheme for the production of the films and describes how these were made. Other matters of interest in connection with the demonstration appear on pages 45 and 47

THE idea of a series of films illustrating the work of physical education in elementary schools, on the lines laid down in the Board of Education Syllabus of 1933, originated with the Physical Education Representative on the Advisory Council of the British Film Institute. Its realisation was made possible by the co-operation of Gaumont British Instructional, Ltd. The completed films offer convincing proof of the valuable service to education which may be rendered by the combined efforts of Institute, Teachers, and Trade.

Outline of the scheme

The series covers the whole range of school life, from the infants of four to the older boys and girls, in rural or urban surroundings, in playgrounds large or small, or in playing-fields. In addition to typical gymnastic lessons and games, it includes two reels in which particular movements are analysed in slow motion and close-ups, and one dealing more generally with bodily carriage in standing, sitting and walking.

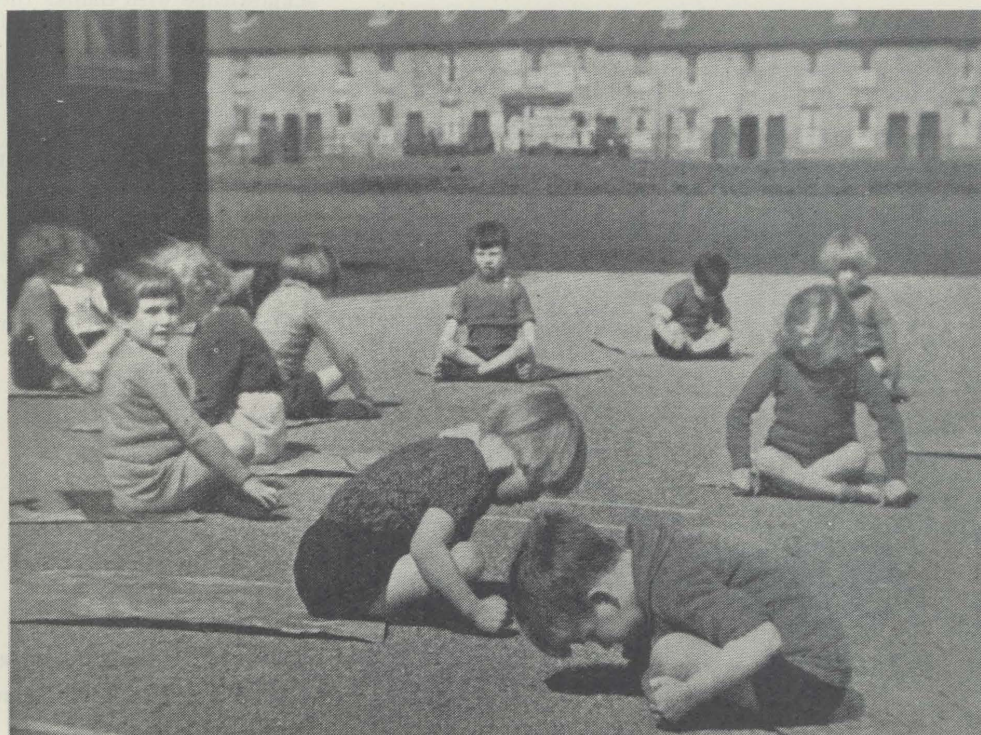
How the films were made

The subject of the film once settled, the Organiser of Physical Education in the selected area and the Advisory Committee decided on the movements to be included and their place in the lesson. The

work was then prepared by the teacher in the chosen school, with the co-operation of the Organiser and of the Local Education Authority. Gaumont-British Instructional, Ltd., then took over direction and photography. The Advisory Committee, meanwhile, considered the content of the accompanying Film Handbook (Synopsis, Purpose of the Film, Notes for Teachers, and Commentary—with detailed attention to the wording of the latter). The final product is the result of close co-operation at every stage between specialists in film making and specialists in physical education. The personnel of the Advisory Committee and of the Gaumont-British Instructional Production Unit is sufficient guarantee of the matter of these films and the manner of its presentation.

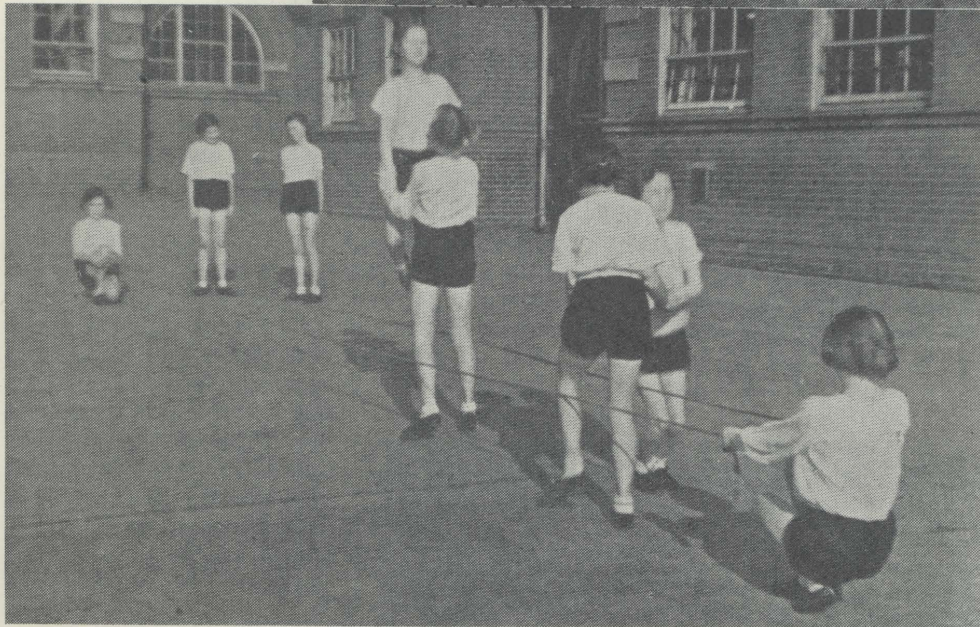
Their varied appeal

The primary object of the series is to show how typical movements described in the Board of Education Syllabus should be performed, and combined into complete lessons. The films are, therefore, of special use to students of physical education and to teachers. They are also of great interest and value to children. But, since they give a bird's-eye view of the methods by which the healthy growth of 90 per cent. of the school population is being promoted, they have in addition a wide appeal to the public at large, and will make a place for themselves in cinema programmes as shorts of general interest. At the present juncture especially they should prove useful in indicating the lines on which improvements in physical education may best be sought.



INFANTS : Cross-legged sitting, bending forward and downward

RURAL SCHOOL MIXED :
Hand standing, with support



GIRLS, 11 years old : sup-
ported skip jumps sideways,
over two ropes



PROGRESSIVE TRAINING
IN BALL HANDLING
GAMES : Running circle
bounce

FILM SUPPLY

A GLASGOW EXPERIMENT

By R. M. Allardyce, Director of Education, Glasgow

Mr. Allardyce here describes how local enterprise has been responsible for a solution of the problem of securing an adequate supply of suitable films for classroom purposes.

INTEREST in school films has grown very rapidly in Glasgow, partly through the encouragement of the Education Committee, who now supply 16 mm. silent projectors as regular school equipment, but chiefly through the enthusiasm of the teachers, which in turn has been fostered by the efforts of the Scottish Educational Film Association. This voluntary body has given excellent service throughout the series of experiments conducted by the Education Committee in the last five years and its latest enterprise, the organisation of classes for instruction in the use of projectors, is its crowning triumph. Six hundred teachers have now completed the course.

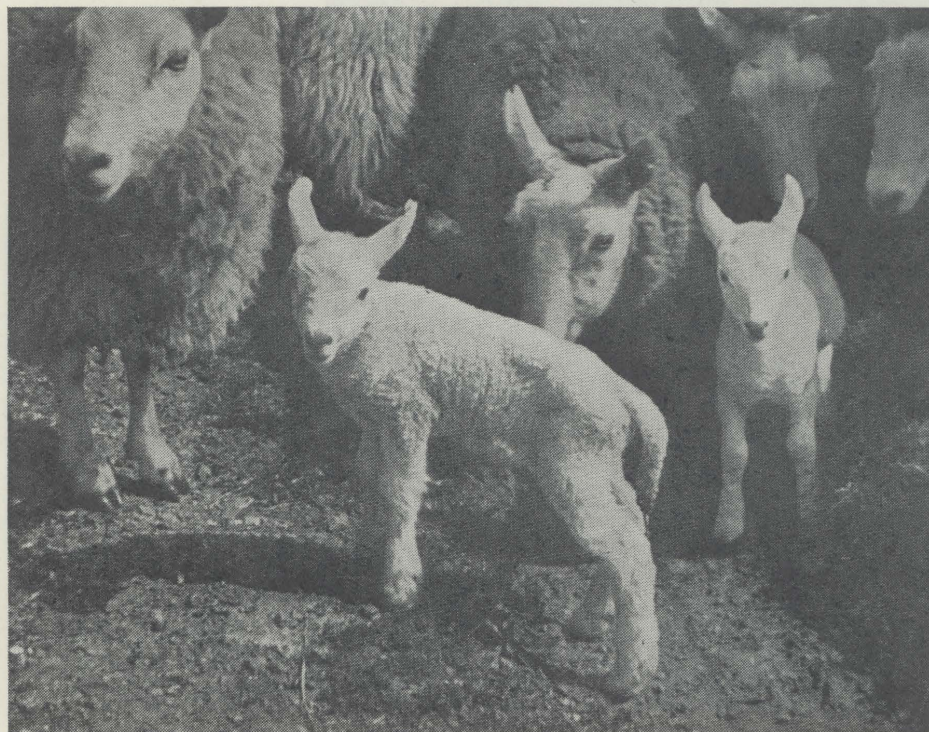
Of the 230 schools under the management of the Education Committee, 70 are now using the cinema regularly and almost as many, anxious to follow their example, have been clamouring in vain for projectors. The sole reason for the delay has been that the supply of suitable films, either for hire or for purchase, is quite inadequate to meet the needs of a larger number of schools than is catered for at present. It is a problem very familiar to all administrators and teachers who have had anything

to do with school cinemas, a problem for which various solutions have been suggested and which will in due time solve itself. In Glasgow it was imperative to find speedily some solution, however makeshift it might be, in order to keep faith with the schools and prevent any further delay in this very desirable advance. In the opinion of most Glasgow teachers a solution has now been found, and rapid developments are assured.

The position in Glasgow

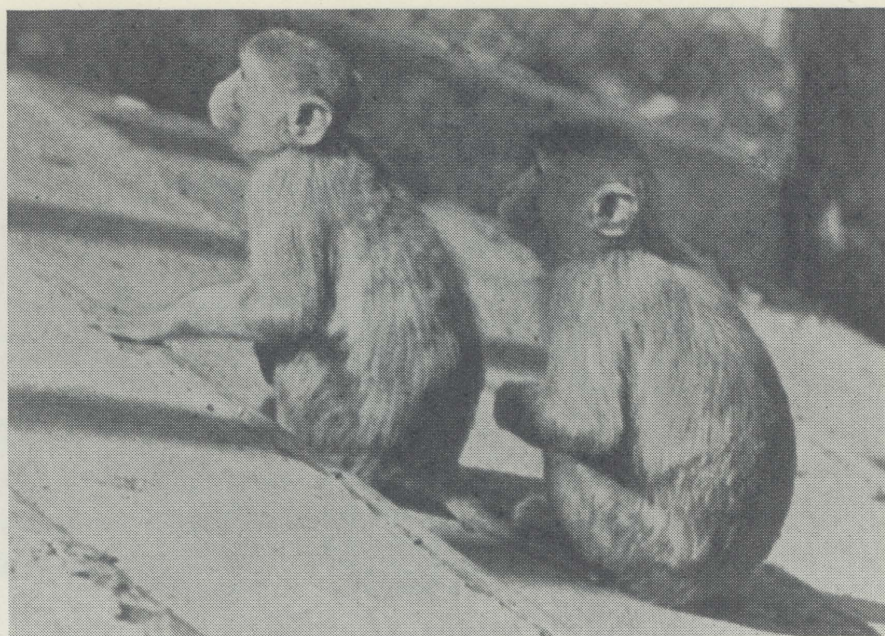
To understand the position one must have some knowledge of the problem as it has presented itself to Glasgow. During the last five years the Education Committee have made several experiments in the use of educational films. The first and best-known covered a period of two years and dealt with classroom films on Geography for pupils of from 12 to 14 years of age. It was followed by less imposing investigations into the value of films in (a) Special Schools, (b) Junior Instruction Centres, (c) Infant Classes, and (d) Continuation Classes. The general conclusions, which need not be given here, were sufficiently favourable to justify a recommendation to the Education Committee to accept the film as a desirable adjunct to the teacher's equipment. One conclusion of particular interest was that for the great mass of younger children in the congested areas, thousands of whom see little of life beyond

their own dingy streets, a new type of film must be found to bridge the gap between their limited experience and the vastly wider world of the conventional travel film. In other words, why show the growing of rice to a child who has never seen a crop of oats or wheat, or llamas and alpacas to one



From THE LAMBS. Direction: Elder; camera: Dalrymple

From ZOO MONKEYS, Elder-Dalrymple production



who has never seen a living cow? It is an uncomfortable fact that children in our more crowded cities can often describe in quite good language the many attributes of the common cow and yet have the haziest notion of its size.

In the experiment with films for Infants a Glasgow teacher, one of the film experts, evolved a farmyard film *Fanny the Cow*. It was too long for its purpose, its subject-matter was "not readily capable of pedagogical treatment," it was too crowded with incident and its photography was not of the highest quality. In short, although it was an excellent amateur effort, it was a very ordinary school film. Yet in that film was the germ of the idea that, so far as the primary school is concerned, has revolutionised the whole treatment of the educational film problem in Glasgow.

Type of film required

That idea, reduced to its lowest terms, is that the classroom film, as such, must be short and simple, and must have regard as far as possible to the unities of time, place and action. Its art must be direct, not symbolic. It must model itself on the modern school reading book, a slowly-evolved

and usually very sound production. All this may seem distressingly obvious and perhaps rather badly propounded, but it has been the basis of a series of thoroughly successful films, which are holding the attention and developing the minds of children whom the ordinary educational film leaves bored or perplexed.

Very few films in the market complied with these requirements, and it was clear that the new films would have to be specially made for Glasgow, either in co-operation with some of the leading film companies or by local effort. Administrative difficulties prevented direct action by the Education Committee itself, whose part was to buy or hire the films, not to produce them. Indirect action by way of encouragement and guidance was, however, well

within their statutory powers, and in due course it was rewarded. The result is that Glasgow, having specified in detail the kind of films it wants, is now being supplied with what it wants, through local enterprise.

The specification is quite simple and can be stated in non-technical language as follows:—



From *SPRING IN THE FIELDS* (The Sower)
Elder-Dalrymple production



GRAIN HARVEST (The
Threshing Mill)
Elder-Dalrymple

The scheme provides for 60 short films of the A or B class, which can be edited and combined into Section C films. For library purposes there is a more advanced class of film—Section D, which consists in the main of lecture-films obtained from the usual trade sources and which is therefore

SECTION A (for children of from 5 to 9 years).

Length: Films of three minutes' duration (100 ft. of 16 mm. film) with plain titles and, as far as possible, no sub-titles (the type of lettering for titles is prescribed).

Subjects: Domesticated animals in their normal surroundings, photographed so as to show their size in comparison with human beings. Films showing the care of the mother for her young are preferred.

SECTION B (for children from 9 to 11 *plus*).

Length: Films of the same length as in Section A, but with limited use of sub-titles where necessary for the convenience of the teacher.

Subjects: Domesticated animals and the uses made of them by man. Simple farming operations. Methods of transport. Children of other lands. Animals of other lands. Simple industrial processes.

Films to be connected back where possible to films included in Section A.

SECTION C (for children from 11 *plus* to 14 *plus*).

Length: (a) Short films as in A and B for showing such subjects as methods of transport, customs of other lands, simple industrial processes, etc.

(b) Longer films of 400 ft. (16 mm.) on the same simple lines as the short films dealing with new subjects not capable of reduction to three minutes' length, or combining extracts from short films into a composite film illustrative of agricultural operations or industrial processes, etc.

Subjects: Geography, Nature Study, Travel, Agriculture, Industry, Customs of other lands, and, to a limited extent, History.

not included in this brief statement.

Of the 60 films planned according to the specification, 23 have been made and are now in use. Popular examples are *Cow and Calf*, *The Lambs*, *Baby Horses*, *The Grain Harvest*, *Sheep-shearing*, and *Homespun*. As an instance of how they can be combined in sequence, one may quote a typical composite film *Bread*, which combines four "shorts" (*Spring in the Fields*, *The Grain Harvest*, *The Miller*, *The Bakery*). Another film is *Wool*, composed of *The Lambs*, *Sheep-shearing*, *Homespun*, *Wool-mills*.

With six copies of each of the sixty new films, supplemented by the excellent pictures contributed by some skilful amateurs from the teaching staff, there is reasonable hope that by the end of this year the primary schools will have access to a supply of films suited to their special needs, and sufficient to justify a much wider distribution of the projectors which an enlightened Education Committee is willing to supply.

NOTE:

Mr. J. C. Elder and Mr. J. Blake Dalrymple, who were responsible for the production of the group of educational films described in Mr. Allardyce's article, are shortly setting out on a three years' world tour to make a film record of their experiences. The films which they will take are intended for exhibition to schools throughout the British Empire. Mr. Elder will direct the films and Mr. Dalrymple, who recently made a trip to the Amazon, during which he secured some valuable film material, will be the principal camera man of the party. During the tour they will present films of Scotland to illustrate the lectures they are to give.

It is hoped to publish in *SIGHT AND SOUND* from time to time articles and reports on their progress.

A HOME-MADE TITLING OUTFIT

By
H. D. Waley

It may sometimes be found desirable in preparing a film for school showing to include a certain amount of titling. The simplest way to produce titles is to buy a titling outfit and follow the maker's direction. The cheapest way is to make one yourself. The outfit here described was not very troublesome to construct, is fairly simple to use, and cost about 4s.

Problems of designing a titler

The following are the problems which have to be faced in designing a titler:—

1. Is it to be horizontal or vertical—that is to say, is the titling-board to be in front of, or underneath the camera? If the former, the board will be upright and, if detachable letters are to be used they will require sticking on, similarly such a board is inappropriate for diagrams with moving arrows and so forth. If, on the other hand, the board is flat, as in the latter case, then the camera has to be provided with a secure perch, free from vibration, which implies careful carpentering.
2. What is to be the distance between the camera and the title-board? Most fixed focus lenses give nothing sharp nearer than 5 or 6 feet. In order to avoid the outfit becoming bulky it appears necessary to employ a supplementary lens, whenever the original lens is not provided with a focussing mount.
3. Most view-finders are untrue at close ranges and therefore deceptive guides in titling. How then, is the true field of the lens to be ascertained?
4. It is desirable to be able to title by artificial light, but the lamps must not be too near or

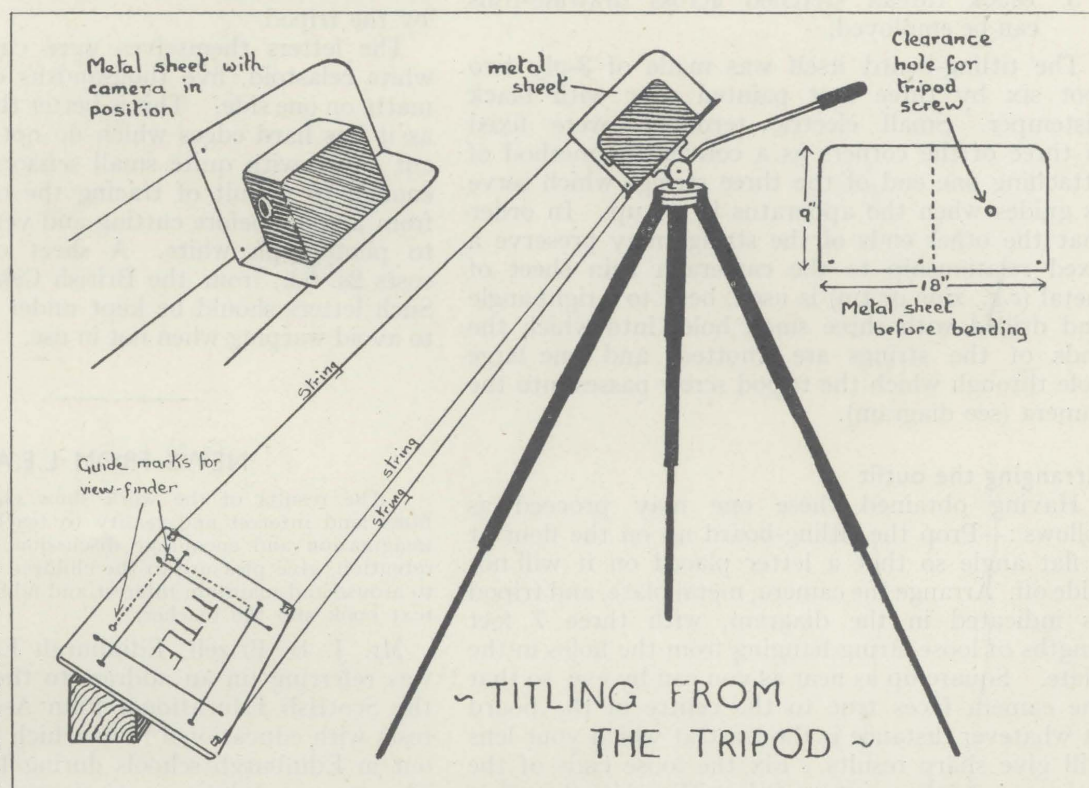
they will spread an uneven light, or too far or they will waste light.

5. It is necessary to have some sort of guide-lines on the board to keep the lettering straight. These must be visible to the human eye, but not recordable by the camera.

How the outfit meets the problems

The outfit here described meets these problems by making use of the tripod (see illustration).

1. The board is neither horizontally nor vertically placed to the camera, but in a position compromising between the two. It is, in fact, propped up on the ground, flat enough to prevent the letters sliding off and tilted enough to make it possible to use a tripod (which would not, of course, let the camera look straight down).
2. The distance from camera to titling-board can be kept long in order to suit fixed-focus lenses. Instead of a rigid connection between camera and board, however, three lengths of string are used—as will be explained—and this overcomes the bulk difficulty.
3. Steps have to be taken to ascertain the exact error of the finder at the distance fixed by the strings, and the error is then allowed for.
4. Two 100 watt opal lamps with reflecting shades at a distance of about 18 inches, one on each side of the titler, will allow normal taking at $f3.5$. With two photofloods in



reflectors one could stop down to f 7 with panchromatic film.

5. Black thread stretched across drawing-pins can be employed.

The titling-board itself was made of 3-ply two foot six by three foot painted over with black distemper. Small electric terminals were fixed in three of the corners as a convenient method of attaching one end of the three strings which serve as guides when the apparatus is set up. In order that the other ends of the strings may preserve a fixed relationship to the camera a thin sheet of metal (*e.g.*, zinc or tin) is used, bent to a right angle and drilled with three small holes into which the ends of the strings are knotted, and one large hole through which the tripod screw passes into the camera (see diagram).

Arranging the outfit

Having obtained these one may proceed as follows:—Prop the titling-board up on the floor at a flat angle so that a letter placed on it will not slide off. Arrange the camera, metal plate, and tripod as indicated in the diagram, with three 7 feet lengths of loose string hanging from the holes in the plate. Square up as near as you can by eye, so that the camera faces true to the centre of the board at whatever distance is the least at which your lens will give sharp results. Fix the loose ends of the string on to the corners of the titling-board so that they are just taut. The only remaining problem now is to ascertain the error of your viewfinder, unless you are among the lucky ones with a viewfinder which can be set true. There are many ways of doing this. One is to cover the surface of the board with a series of recognisable landmarks, note carefully which appear in the corners of your viewfinder and look through your gate if you can—or take an exposure if you can't—to see which landmarks are in the corners of the true photographic field. A simple way of covering your board with landmarks is to pin magazine covers temporarily all over it. You can then mark off, *e.g.*, with a small prick in the wood, the four corners of your true field and at least two of the corners of your finder's field. You can then act afterwards on the assumption that, when you have sighted your two finder-corners (marked with drawing-pin heads) in your finder, your camera is actually pointing at the true field already marked out. I have seen it suggested that sensitive paper might be used instead of film for tests of this sort, which might certainly be useful to those who do not process at home.

When one comes to take this outfit down to put it away one has merely (in addition of course, to the camera and tripod) a flat board with a scrap of metal plate tied to it with string to dispose of. This does not take up much room, as it packs nearly flat. The object of the string is to enable the board to be set up again in approximately the same relationship to the camera. The view-finding, as corrected, then determines the exact relationship quite easily. It will be noticed in the diagram that

the title is set upside-down to the camera, as this is right-way-up to oneself, if one sits arranging the title from the side of the board which isn't occupied by the tripod.

The letters themselves were cut out of No. 3 white celastoid, five thousandths of an inch thick, matte on one side. This is better than card or paper as it has hard edges which do not dog-ear, can be cut easily with quite small scissors, is transparent enough to permit of tracing the outline of letters from a guide before cutting and yet opaque enough to photograph white. A sheet of this material costs 2s. 6d., from the British Celanese Company. Such letters should be kept under a little pressure to avoid warping when not in use.

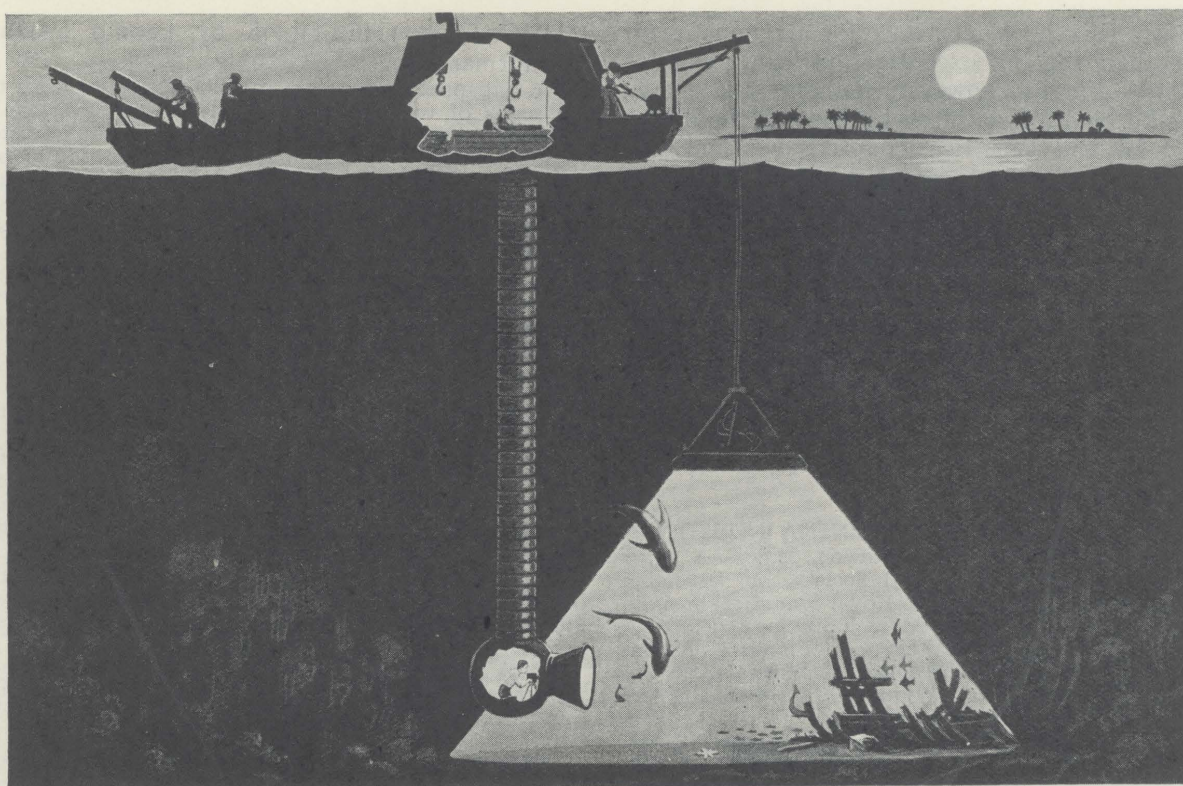
NEWS FROM L.E.A.'s

"The results of the work show clearly that suitable films lend interest and reality to teaching, stimulate the imagination and encourage discussion, help the power of retention, give pleasure to the children, and therefore help to arouse and maintain interest and add a force besides the text book and the teacher."

Mr. J. B. Frizell, Edinburgh Education Officer, was referring (in an address to the local branch of the Scottish Educational Film Association) to the tests with educational films which had been carried out in Edinburgh schools during 1934-5 and since. The recommendations put forward as a result of the investigations suggest the lines along which the use of the film as an educational medium can best be developed in the area. These recommendations, which include provision for increased grant from the Education Committee for developing the use of the film in schools, and suggestions for the formation of a local film library for schools, have now been approved by the Education Committee.

The London County Council will not formulate its policy on the use of educational films until the results of its experiment are available. It has been experimenting with the use of films in the classroom, six projectors having been installed in selected schools. In these schools the films are being used as an integral part of the curriculum. As part of its scheme the L.C.C. has also arranged mass demonstrations in certain Metropolitan areas, and from the beginning of February to the end of March, twenty-eight such demonstrations took place. The programmes were selected with the assistance and advice of a consultative committee of head teachers.

At Wolverhampton a special committee of teachers has just been constituted to organise an experiment in the showing of films to school children, and in many other areas, including Bristol, the North Riding of Yorkshire and Birmingham, the education authorities are adopting similar measures to test the value of films for schools. Mr. R. M. Allardyce describes on another page what has been done by the Glasgow Education Committee to promote the use of the film in the schools.



The Williamson submarine tube which made it possible to take the first under-sea motion pictures

Blocks kindly lent by Messrs. John Lane (Bodley Head)

BOOK REVIEWS

TWENTY YEARS UNDER THE SEA

by J. E. Williamson, John Lane (Bodley Head), 15s.

MR. H. G. WELLS' superscientific and super-inquisitive couple who insist on being shot up to the moon just to see what is there would, I am sure, recognise a worthy ancestor in the author of this book who insisted on being lowered through a hole in the bottom of a boat down a flexible tube into a submarine observation chamber just to photograph the fishes. Moreover one may doubt whether when (and if) they got to the moon they found there scenes more strange than those which Mr. Williamson describes and illustrates. As for risk to personal safety, typhoons in the Bahamas (to say nothing of the sharks which Mr. Williamson insisted on knifing personally) make the moon rocket-voyage seem comparatively like a summer picnic in the Surrey woods.

In 1913 Mr. Williamson was on the staff of an American paper when he conceived the idea of borrowing the new type of salvage ship with which his father was experimenting and attempting to get under-sea photographs simply as a journalistic novelty. He found that he could get adequate light for exposures as short as those required for cinematography, and this led him on to his next move, the equipping of an expedition to the West Indies in order to make the first submarine film.

After hair-raising adventures, duly chronicled, the film was successfully completed and was first

shown to a scientific audience at the Smithsonian Institute amid unstinted applause. In order, however, to re-imburse those who had financed the expedition, something more than this was needed—box-office success in the ordinary houses of entertainment. As usual the showmen of the industry predicted that a film without plot and without love interest could not possibly achieve this, and as usual they were wrong. However, he soon succumbed to the temptation of rendering a rather obvious fictional subject, and in 1915 he embarked on a film version of Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. He spared no pains in the interests of realism, even constructing a dummy octopus of imposing dimensions with coiled spring and india-rubber arms, worked by a man crouching inside its body. Once more fortune smiled on the financial results of submarine photography, even going so far as to arrange that the German U-boat which popped up so dramatically in New York at this stage of the War, thereby focussing men's minds on subaqueous affairs, should do so on the very day of the film's opening show.

The story now skips ten years, and 1925 finds Mr. Williamson in Hollywood planning *Mysterious Island*, a film of Jules Verne's sequel to *Twenty Thousand Leagues*. Needless to say, Hollywood envisaged not a sequel merely but a super-sequel. The players were to be stars, the photographs were to be in colour. Waves of hectic activity swept over the scenario department. The scene was to be in America, the scene was to be in Russia, the scene was to be nowhere in particular. Of all the

queer fish this book portrays for us none seem queerer than the big executives of Hollywood at that date. Finally, however, the film got made, only to be blighted at birth by the advent of the talkies. In the last two chapters we find Mr. Williamson's resources again put at the service of science, collecting material for seven groups of Bahaman fishes in realistic surroundings to be set up in the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. Science, though a less glamorous mistress than fiction, proved at any rate a less wayward one. This is a readable book, in spite of its rather journalistic style, whether regarded as a tale of adventure or a sidelight on Fate's capricious way of dealing with film-makers.

H. D. WALEY

NEW BOOKS

A STATISTICAL SURVEY OF THE CINEMA INDUSTRY IN GREAT BRITAIN IN 1934, by S. Rowon, M.Sc. A paper read before the Royal Statistical Society, on December 17th, 1935. Obtainable from the Royal Statistical Society, 9, Adelphi Terrace, W.C.2. 1s. 9d. including postage.

THE LITTLE CHIMNEY SWEEP, a Pictorial Record of the Silhouette Film, *The Little Chimney Sweep*, by Lotte Reiniger. White and White, 5, Pipe Lane, Bristol 7s. 6d. (or 6s. if ordered before 2nd June).

RADIO, by Rudolf Arnheim. Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.

WORLD FILM NEWS, a new film monthly, price 6d., which is intended to provide a digest of important cinema news. W. F. N. says of itself: "In the film world there is an excellent service of commercial and trade news and an excellent service for fans. There is no news service which reports on creative people and creative efforts in the many branches of cinema. W. F. N. is, in this sense, a necessary paper."

THE LONDON REPORTER, a new daily film trade paper. 3d.

MUSIC FOR THE FILMS by Leonid Sabaneev, Pitmans, 6s.

Mr. Sabaneev writes on a subject of vital concern to all musicians of to-day, who contemplate entering the film business either as Conductor, Composer or Orchestrator.

He knows his subject from A to Z and except in his statements as to the restricted strength of orchestras imposed by movie technique, this compact little work may be safely adopted as a text book by any musician who wishes to study this branch of his craft.

Mr. Sabaneev's thesis as to restriction of orchestras will not hold good to-day. Wide range and silent recording, improvements in microphone technique, and the methods of recording in general, have made it possible to use vast orchestras and choirs without distortion and with little loss.

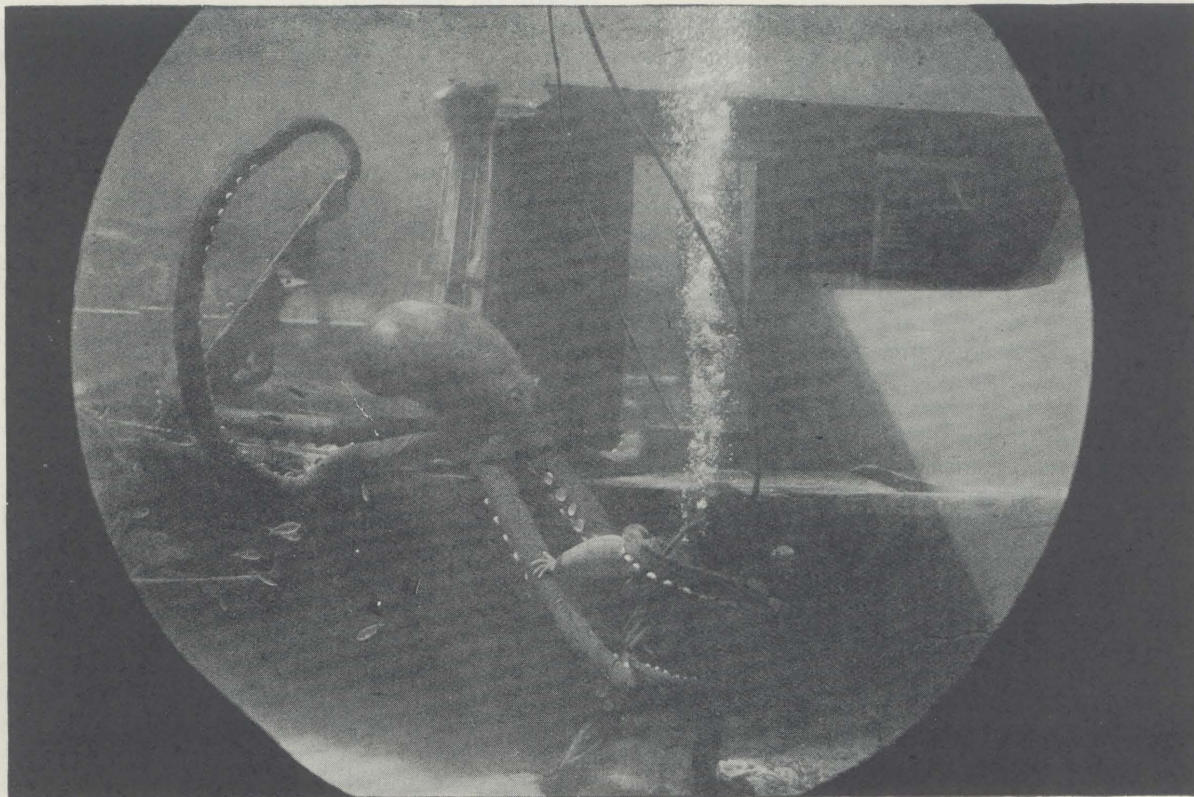
Much of the detail of the mechanism of the recording on film is of immense interest to the beginner and, apart from the exception I have made, Mr. Sabaneev has written a complete text book and his detailed description of the effect of the different instruments of the orchestras, in recording, will be of great assistance to the orchestrator when writing his first movie score.

His chapter on the aesthetics of the sound film should be of considerable interest to the lay reader, who would afterwards realise the vast amount of work and study necessary in this branch of the cinema.

Script writers and film directors also will find food for thought in this chapter in which Mr. Sabaneev quietly refutes the idea that the cinema public is without artistic sense.

The book is so clearly written on all technical points, that one must congratulate Mr. Sabaneev on having accomplished a difficult task. I cannot think of any necessary detail which the title of the book would be required to cover, that he has missed, in fact a more complete text book for the musician desiring complete knowledge of the "movie" branch of his art, would be difficult to find. For a work so intricate in technicalities, the translation is more than adequate.

LOUIS LEVY



A scene staged under water, with dummy octopus, for the film version of Jules Verne's "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea."

PLAN FOR CINEMA, by Dallas Bower, Messrs. Dent, 6s.

Mr. Bower, like Hamlet, evidently feels that the times are out of joint. Unlike Hamlet, however, he seems rather pleased that he was born to set them right. At any rate he unabashedly enjoys the blasting operations which he deems necessary to clear the ground for the establishment of his imposing new edifice, the cinema solidified, coloured and re-moulded beyond all recognition.

Every artist whose taste runs to theory as well as practice must naturally be led at times to speculate on what could be achieved if his medium were freed from this, that, or the other limitation. Mr. Bower has a sufficiently ingenious hypothesis of this sort to have formed the basis of a very interesting discussion. His imaginary medium is cinematography plus colour plus a new sort of stereoscopy which enables the audience to surround the "screen" (a cube or cylinder) instead of sitting in front of a picture.

If one chooses to imagine this as a possibility a number of interesting problems present themselves. Is there something inherently wrong with the moving coloured picture presented in a manner which makes it seem framed? Will television encroach on the present province of the film theatre's "framed picture" and compel the film theatre to make a move in some new direction? Was Hardy in *The Dynasts* feeling out towards a new art-form which he himself but dimly apprehended? All these problems Mr. Bower brings up and thereby merits our thanks. But the philosophic reader will find it difficult not to be irritated by the acrimonious tone introduced into almost every stage of the argument, while the scientific reader will jib at his assertion that a stereoscopic effect could be obtained by projecting on to the four sides of a cubical screen with four projectors, one opposite each side. I read through the passage describing this proposal several times carefully, supposing that I must in some way have misunderstood it, for it seemed (and seems) to me as plain as a pikestaff that such a method could only produce four flat pictures each seen with a different degree of foreshortening.

H. D. WALEY

CATALOGUE OF BRITISH MEDICAL FILMS, British Film Institute, 1s.

The Catalogue of British Medical Films which has recently been published by the British Film Institute was compiled by the Institute's Medical Panel. For the past two years the Panel has been collecting information on existing medical films in this country, during which time it has addressed enquiries and circulated questionnaires to Universities, Medical Schools, bodies interested in hygiene and public health, and to lecturers and others who have made and used films for their own work. Films are being used to a considerable extent to-day in medical schools, universities and hospitals, but until the publication of the Catalogue, the source and availability of these films were not generally known.

The booklet begins with an account of the events leading to the formation of the Medical Panel of the British Film Institute and sets out briefly the aims to which their work is directed. The later paragraphs of the introduction have some apt remarks on the production of medical films and the methods of using them. It is evident that the members of the Panel have had unique opportunities of reviewing the work of British amateur and professional producers, and of seeing in what respects many films fail in the presentation of their subject. It is to be hoped therefore that advantage will be taken of the Panel's offer of advice on the production of medical films, and that the value to medical men and to the general public of many future films will be thereby increased.

With regard to the Catalogue itself the most striking thing is the great care with which the classification of the films has been carried out. The matter is arranged under headings which convey at once the use to which any particular film may best be put. Where a film is of interest from more than one point of view the title is included in all the appropriate sections. The short notes appended give valuable information as to the type of films and where reference should be made in regard to them.

The Medical Panel are to be congratulated on the production of this booklet which contains so much valuable information in a compact and convenient form.

JAMES WHILLIS

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IN "TO-DAY'S CINEMA," DATED 3rd APRIL, 1936

GENTLEMEN,

The special demonstration of physical education films for use in schools held under your auspices at the New Gallery was of more than intrinsic interest. It shows that the work of visual education is going steadily forward.

This is good news indeed. Partly because the film is probably the most potent means of instruction since the invention of printing. And partly because, if reports are correct, England still lags far behind many Continental countries in the use of films in schools (in spite of our probable eminence in documentaries and other films usually classed as "educationals") and the sooner this disparity is made up the better. Though for higher motives, England can no more afford to be behind other countries in the use of films in schools, than, before the war, she could afford to be behind Germany in the matter of technology and scientific instruction.

The five excellent little shorts shown by you to an appreciative audience of educationalists were, as it happened, Gaumont-British Instructionals. But, as was pointed out, the Institute is interested in the productions of all companies who are prepared to make expertly planned and directed pictures for educational use. For the past three or four years, we, ourselves, have consistently urged British producers to seize the opportunity that confronted them. Such demonstrations as these that have been organised show that there are producers with the right sort of vision and initiative.

Probably the economics of our educational organisation provide the main reason why progress in the installation of projection equipment and the showing of films in schools is not making more rapid progress.

Without particularising, can we not think of items in our national expenditure that are less deserving of assistance?

TO-DAY'S CINEMA.

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

National Film Library

DURING the last quarter the acquisitions of the National Film Library have steadily increased, and the number of reels now received for preservation purposes is in the neighbourhood of seven hundred: the films are of all kinds, and all periods from 1900 to 1936.

Amongst the most recent additions to the Library's collection have been copies of *The Champion*, one of the best of the early Chaplin films; *Simple Charity* (1910), one of the earliest Mary Pickford films, in one reel; and a John Bunny film *The Golf Game and the Bonnet*. During his short career (1911-1915) John Bunny's fame became world-wide, and he is still remembered affectionately by many older cinemagoers.

It is as essential for the Library to acquire current films, however, as to discover and collect old ones. No more gratifying encouragement has been received by the Library Committee in its work than the willing co-operation given by the film trade. All the five principal newsreel companies in this country, for example, have given the Library copies of the newsreel issued at the times of the Jubilee and Funeral of the late King, a collection embracing not only complete records of these events, but also the many other retrospective scenes from his life which were included. Mr. John Maxwell, of Wardour Films, has very kindly presented a copy of *Blackmail* (1929), the first British talkie, directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Finally, as has already been widely announced in the press, London Film Productions have been good enough to donate to the Library a copy of the new Wells-Korda production, *Things to Come*.

The National Film Library gave its first demonstration of films at the Polytechnic Cinema on February 21st, a full account of which appears elsewhere in these pages. The programme was arranged to illustrate the development of the film from 1896 to 1915. This programme has since been shown again on March 31st by the Merseyside Film Institute Society, when the meeting was opened by Mr. R. S. Lambert, a Governor of the Film Institute and a member of the National Film Library Committee. A substantial part of the programme was also repeated by the London Film Institute Society on March 25th, and by the Glasgow Film Society on March 29th, whilst individual films have also been shown at Bath, Eton College and Aberdeen Film Society. Arrangements are being made to show these films in other parts of the country.

It is intended to make the more interesting of the films in the Library available to students and

interested audiences, by issuing them, both separately and in specially constructed programmes, on sub-standard copies. A complete descriptive catalogue of films in the Library is now being prepared and this will contain a special section devoted to films available for distribution. As announced in the last number of *SIGHT AND SOUND*, a considerable number of films of an educational character has been received for this purpose, for circulation to schools, clubs and similar bodies which are members of the Institute.

Information Bureau

The work of the Information Department during the last quarter has continued to grow steadily. A large number of current periodicals are read and indexed daily, and these references, together with the growing number of reference works being acquired by the Department and its contacts with other sources of information, enable it to answer the many queries coming in by letter and by telephone.

During the last quarter the Department has been able to assist the organisers of the L.C.C. School-films Experiment; information has also been supplied on a number of occasions to the Board of Trade, the Foreign Office and other Government Departments. A new departure has been the preparation of a list of educational films for use in connection with the syllabus of the B.B.C. broadcasts to schools, which, it is believed, will prove useful to those who use both film and wireless in school, and who have felt the need of a visual aid to supplement the aural one. Early in the quarter a reprint of Film Institute leaflet No. 5 on sub-standard films and apparatus was necessitated, and another completely revised edition is now being prepared. A number of additions has recently been made to the reference library of books, which now covers a large number of subjects.

Work of Committees

There has been a most satisfactory response to the questionnaire on science teaching films. Replies have been received from schools, museums, vocational guidance centres and the Royal Air Force, and the Committee will proceed to prepare its report on science teaching films based on these answers.

At the request of a producing company the Committee has prepared in outline a series of films on ecology and the detailed scripts for a series of four films on Wave Motion. A well-known firm which makes its own publicity films has also offered to make some educational films to the suggestions and under the supervision of the Committee, and the Committee are preparing scripts for these.

The draft report of the Geography Committee on Geography Teaching Films is nearing completion. The introduction to the report embodies a summary of previous reports on the subject, and describes briefly the aims and results of past experiments with films in geography teaching. In the second section consideration is given to the defects in films now used for geography teaching, and the present scope and sources of supply of geography teaching films are dealt with. Section 3 discusses the general principles which should govern the making of geography films. Among the other questions which will be covered in this section are the use of silent and sound films, the use of diagrams, the need for emphasis in economic geography films on human activities. The fourth section will contain detailed suggestions for series of films on the regional geography, physical geography and economic geography of each continent, the films being of the kind most urgently needed by schools. At the request of one of the producing firms recommendations have been made on an outline series of six films on the West Indies, and on two other series dealing with regional geography and with ports and their hinterland.

Messrs. Cadbury have now completed a one-reel film, *Cocoa from the Gold Coast*. The material is taken from *The Night Watchman's Story* and has been edited to the specifications of the Geography Committee. Copies of the film are to be presented to the National Film Library, and are to be available to members of the Institute.

The Rt. Hon. Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., very graciously consented to open a special demonstration of physical education films which was arranged by the British Film Institute at the New Gallery Cinema on Thursday, April 2nd. Lord Derby was introduced by Mr. J. J. Lawson, M.P., one of the Governors of the Institute.

The programme consisted of five of the series of films made by G.-B. Instructional in collaboration with the Physical Education Committee of the Institute. The show was arranged to make the films more widely known and to give practical demonstration of the kind of results which can be achieved by full and effective collaboration between a Committee of the Institute and a company desiring to produce education films which will meet the needs of teachers. Such collaboration and assistance from its Committees is offered by the Institute to any individual or company wishing to produce educational films.

Invitations to attend the demonstration were sent to Government Departments, members of Parliament, education authorities, interested voluntary bodies, and to the press.

The films shown were as follows:—**Carriage; Boys : average age 10 ; Girls : average age 11 ; Summer Playing Field Activities : Boys ; Rural School.** We publish elsewhere an article by Mr. R. E. Roper, a member of the Committee, giving an outline of the scheme and a description of how the films were made.

The *Catalogue of British Medical Films* compiled by the Medical Panel has received an excellent press. Notices have appeared commending its publication both in the medical journals and the national newspapers. Copies have been distributed to universities, medical schools, selected libraries, bodies interested in hygiene and public health, as well as to those authors and owners who have helped in its compilation by supplying particulars of their films. Arrangements have been made with the Colonial Office for distribution of the Catalogue to the Colonies, and members of the British Film Institute who are interested have been supplied with a copy on request.

Medical Panel

The Medical Panel will shortly consider issuing Supplements to the Catalogue, and will give its attention in the first place to the publication of a Colonial Supplement. It will be remembered that the Panel is conducting an inquiry with the object of discovering what medical films are in use in the colonies.

Among the other matters which the Panel is considering at the present time are the type of film required for medical instruction and for propaganda, the co-operation of the specialist with the professional photographer; the general improvement of medical films and the subjects which best lend themselves to film presentation.

Documentary Film Panel

The Documentary Film Panel of the Institute is giving consideration to the effect of the Cinematograph Act 1927 on the production, distribution and exhibition of documentary films. Discussions have taken place on the particular problems which the Documentary film encounters as a result of the operation of the Act.

Monthly Film Bulletin

A new development in the Monthly Film Bulletin which has taken place during the last quarter is the creation of a special section devoted to Religious Films. One of the greatest difficulties confronting those who wish to use films for religious purposes is the absence of any authoritative information or evaluation of such films as are already available. It was agreed, therefore, that one of the first tasks of the newly-formed Cinema Christian Council, and one on which it could profitably collaborate with the British Film Institute, was the setting up of a joint viewing panel for religious films. The Panel consists of twenty members appointed by the Cinema Christian Council and four appointed by the Institute; members nominated by the British Film Institute will advise from a technical point of view. The Panel has met on three occasions, the first meeting being occupied with the discussion of the general principles on which the Panel might work. Twelve films have already been viewed and the

criticisms have appeared in the Monthly Film Bulletin, as will all future reviews of this Panel. This section of the Bulletin will thus not only prove of value to the churches and religious bodies throughout the country who are looking for guidance of this kind, but will constitute a useful source of reference to those who are planning the production of future religious films.

Meetings addressed during the Quarter

The Institute has provided lecturers, and in some cases illustrative demonstrations, for the following organisations during the quarter:

Ashford and District Teachers' Association (N.U.T.).

Cambridge University Training College Association.

East Midlands One-Day School (University of Nottingham Adult Education Department).

Federal Council of Teachers of Northern Ireland.

Forest Educational Fellowship.

Hammersmith Adult School.

London and National Society for Women's Services.

Manchester Film Society.

Romford and District Head Teachers' Association.

Walsall and District Teachers' Association (N.U.T.).

Wolverhampton Education Committee.

Y.W.C.A. Crouch End Branch.

The Institute has also arranged demonstrations for various Education Committees, Board of Education Courses for Teachers and similar meetings and organisations.

Deputations

Deputations of the British Film Institute waited on the Executive Committees of the Association of Education Committees and of the Association of Directors and Secretaries for Education on January 23rd and January 29th respectively.

Membership

On June 30th, 1935, there were 400 members of the British Film Institute. On March 30th this year there were 607.

Staff

Mr. H. D. Waley, who has been technical adviser to the B.F.I. since its establishment, and who has been responsible for the Technical Section of SIGHT AND SOUND, has now been appointed to the permanent staff.

16mm. SOUND FILM STANDARD

On the 20th March, Lord Riverdale, who had consented to arbitrate this problem, announced his decision in favour of the adoption by this country of the standard promulgated by the American Society of Motion Picture Engineers (known as the S.M.P.E. standard). The British Film Institute had already agreed to abide by the Arbitrator's decision, and their previous endorsement of the standard promulgated by the Istituto Internazionale per la Cinematografia Educativa di Rome (known as the I.C.E. standard) is therefore superseded.

The various companies concerned with apparatus and libraries have agreed to adopt the S.M.P.E. standard as the British standard for 16mm. sound-film.

B.F.I. BRANCHES

BECONTREE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: R. Gillion, Dagenham Adult Institute, St. George's Road, Dagenham, Essex.

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: C. Walker, "Eskdale," Old Shoreham Road, Southwick, Sussex.

An interesting programme of instructional films was arranged by the Society in February. It was held in Brighton in conjunction with the Brighton Education Committee, the films shown being made by G.B. Instructional.

It was announced in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND that arrangements were being made for the first of what was hoped to be regular Sunday shows of unusual films in Brighton. The Society has been able to follow up this matter, and two shows of such films are shortly to be held. One is to take place in April and one in May, and next season it is expected that these shows will be organised regularly each month.

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Rev. F. C. Vyvyan Jones, 16, West Park, Clifton, Bristol.

The Society is increasing its membership. During January visits were paid to local cinemas to see recommended films. On February 17th a lecture on colour photography was given by a representative of Messrs. Spicer-Dufay. The Monthly Bulletin of films appearing in Bristol is still issued and is much appreciated.

[We are asked to announce as being of interest particularly to members of the Institute living in Bristol that a Bijou Film Theatre to seat about 30 persons and which will be confined to the use of 16 mm. and other sub-standard films, was opened by the Chairman of the Bristol Development Board on Wednesday, February 12th. Anyone who is interested or who wishes to secure the use of the theatre should get in touch with Mr. F. G. Warne, at 30, Baldwin Street, Bristol, 1].

CHICHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: G. A. Wilkins, "Glengarry," Orchard Avenue, Chichester.

LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Miss Olwen Vaughan, Brandis House, 92, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4.

The series of ten lectures on "Films and Film Making" which were arranged by the Society in conjunction with the Mary Ward Settlement, have proved popular and were attended on an average by 90 people. Paul Rotha, Hugh Gray, Basil Wright, Alberto Cavalcanti, Stephen Harrison, Fred Watts, Andrew Buchanan, Mary Field, Arthur Vesselo and Alistair Cooke gave the lectures, and interesting discussions followed in each case.

On Sunday afternoon, February 23rd, Lotte Reiniger, the well-known silhouette film producer, gave a talk on her work, which was illustrated by two of her early films, *Carmen* and *Harlequin*. The management of the Forum, Villiers Street, kindly lent the Society their Cinema for this purpose and over 400 members and their friends attended.

A programme of old films—"A Survey of the Cinema 1900-1913" was shown to members at the Gaumont British Private Theatre on March 25th. The films shown were from the National Film Library and the collection of Mr. Alberto Cavalcanti. One of the items in the programme was Hepworth's *David Copperfield* made in 1913, which was lent by the courtesy of W. F. R. Arton, of Artons Ltd.

The Sudbury Film Society, an amateur cine group, has become affiliated to the Society, and it is hoped that this will be the first of many affiliations which will make the work and services of the Society more widely known.

In view of the support which the Committee has received from members and the steady increase in the number of members, important developments in the Society's work are being arranged.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : J. Norman Bamforth, 9, Chestnut Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

The Society has lost its Treasurer, Mr. J. M. Gillespie, who has been appointed to a post in Johannesburg. Mr. Gillespie had acted as Treasurer from the inception of the Society in December, 1934. The Society wishes him every happiness and success in his new post.

The Society welcomes his successor, Mr. J. D. Sinclair, who was elected at a meeting held on February 7th. Mr. Heming Vaughan, Chairman of the Merseyside Society, was present at this meeting and delivered an inspiring address on the work accomplished by his own Branch of the Institute. It is hoped that this visit will be the prelude to a closer relationship between the two branches.

On January 24th, Mr. Stuart Legg of the G.P.O. Film Unit, who directed *B.B.C.—Voice of Britain*, spoke on "Some Problems of Sound Films." On Thursday, February 26th, Mr. F. A. Hoare, Educational Consultant to the Western Electric Co., spoke on "The Sound Film in Education and Propaganda," and underlined the importance of the documentary films which are being made at present for publicity purposes. Several propaganda films were shown. The final meeting of the season was on March 27th when a display of educational films was arranged.

The Society has now begun to issue a monthly bulletin of films showing locally. It has also gained a valuable new member in Mr. Cyril Ray, formerly Assistant Secretary of the Merseyside Film Institute Society, who has now come to Manchester as Manager of the Tatler News Theatre.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : J. A. Parker, 5-6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.

Since the New Year the Society's activities have been particularly numerous and interesting. An outstanding event was the visit of Mr. Alistair Cooke, Film Critic to the B.B.C., who lectured brilliantly on "The Film Critic and Society." The third Private Film Show of the season was given in February at the David Lewis Theatre, when *Sunshine Susie*, Hitchcock's *Blackmail* and Lotte Reiniger's *Das Gestohlene Herz* were shown.

On March 13th the Society had the pleasure of meeting Miss Lotte Reiniger in person. A special programme of films was arranged, including two of Miss Reiniger's silhouette films—*Carmen* and her latest work *Galatea*—and Miss Reiniger gave a short talk on the technique of her films. In conjunction with this event, the Society arranged an exhibition of Miss Reiniger's work.

On 3rd March the 16 mm. version of Eisenstein's *October* was shown. Other events include a lecture by Dr. Dorothy Knowles (in the series of lectures on film directors) on "The French Directors" and a talk by Mr. Walter Harding on "Colour Photography" illustrated by a number of his own colour films. The Society continues to co-operate with the schools in organising special film shows for children. On 31st January the School's Film Institute Society gave a film show for its members at a Liverpool school after school hours.

An important experiment with the use of educational films in elementary schools during school hours was made in February. The University Settlement arranged for the use of the David Lewis Theatre as a convenient centre for some twenty schools to test out the availability of this theatre. Two shows were given, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and a further performance with a feature film was given after school hours at 4.30 p.m. Some 1,200 children came and with the co-operation of the teaching staff everything worked smoothly. Should this hall be equipped permanently with projectors there is every likelihood of this educational work with the children continuing.

NORTHERN IRELAND FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : W. H. Welply, O.B.E., Rantaldard, Whitehouse, Belfast.

Committee meetings of this Branch have been held regularly month by month since October inclusive, and on 26th November a meeting for members and their friends was held in the Carlton Hall, Belfast, at which the Rev. Nichol Cross initiated a discussion on the films *David*

Copperfield, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, etc. The Chairman, Mr. Bonaparte Wyse, first addressed the meeting, and the discussion which followed was of much interest. At the Committee meeting of 9th December it was decided that members should be invited to attend on 21st March the Conference of the Federal Council on Education, the morning session of which was addressed by Mr. W. Farr of the British Film Institute. Arrangements are also being made for a public meeting to be addressed on 20th April by the President of the Society, the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava. It should be added that some of the Committee, notably Mrs. Wilfred Haughton, have been active in recruiting new members, and the numbers show a gratifying increase recently.

SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Jt. Hon. Secs. : C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2, and Stanley L. Russell, 14, Kelvin Drive, Glasgow, N.W.

Lord Nigel Douglas-Hamilton has accepted the Scottish Film Council's invitation to become its Chairman, in succession to Lord Tweedsmuir, who has agreed to be the Council's Hon. President.

The Council's Monthly Bulletin has been a great success. Its circulation mounts every month and is now approaching 6,000. Its character has been changed considerably since it was first published. It is less formal in appearance and is expected to be made in October into a 12 page magazine. A still from one of the Council's Recommended Films is being used as the cover and thumb-nail caricatures of the players in these films are also being included in the Bulletin. Each month the Bulletin's chief feature is a specially contributed article, usually 1,000—2,000 words long. The articles already published are "The Film in Glasgow Schools" by R. M. Allardyce (Bulletin No. 2); "The Use of Sub-standard Films by Social Service Bodies," by C. A. Oakley and A. Russell Borland (No. 3); "Amateur Ciné Movement in Scotland," by Ian S. Ross (No. 5); "The Film in Edinburgh Schools," by J. B. Frizell (No. 6). The Council will be pleased to supply a copy of any particular Bulletin to interested persons.

The Entertainment Panel has continued its policy of recommending films, the films recommended since the last number of *SIGHT AND SOUND* being *The Ghost Goes West*, *Accent on Youth*, *The Last Outpost*, *Moscow Nights*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Metropolitan*, and *Mutiny on the Bounty*. The scheme for reviewing educational films is almost completed. Viewing committees of teachers are being set up in various parts of Scotland. The films which they approve as being suitable for teaching purposes will then be considered by subject committees. Senior lecturers of the Universities, Technical Colleges and Training Colleges are joining these subject committees. The Social Service Panel is setting up a Churches sub-committee and the Amateur Cinematograph Panel is considering methods by which amateur cinematography can be developed in Scotland during the Summer.

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES

FILM SOCIETY OF AYRSHIRE, Hon. Sec.: J. A. Paton Walker, 5, St. Marnock Street, Kilmarnock.

The Society was formed in November of last year, the meetings being held in the Broadway Cinema, Prestwick. The venture has been a successful one, and so far meetings have been held every month since November. Among the films shown were *Weather Forecast*, *Joie de Vivre*, *Der Traumende Mund*, *The Private Life of the Gannets*, *L'Atalante*, *Pett and Pott*. On January 26th Mr. C. A. Oakley addressed the Society on "The Development of the Cinema."

BILLINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: H. S. Coles, 3, Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees.

At the two latest meetings of the Society, the programmes have included *Der Kleine Schornsteinfeger*, *The Road to Life*, *Thunder in the Air*, *The Slump is Over*. The last performance of the season takes place on April 22nd. The attendance at the performance on February 26th was 870.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Mrs. R. C. Knight, 21, Carpenter Road, Birmingham, 15.

Among the films shown at the Society's regular meetings have been *Housing Problems*, *Jazz Comedy*, *Le Petit Roi*, *Three Songs of Lenin*. In addition there have been two extra meetings, the first held in conjunction with the Midland Adult School Union, when the *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was shown, and a discussion arranged introduced by Mr. W. H. Auden; the second to allow the members previously disappointed to see *Dr. Caligari*. A lecture on film history and technique has recently been given to the English Club of a local girls' school.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: Miss J. O'Sullivan, Catholic Film Society, 36, Gt. Smith Street, S.W.1.

At the monthly meeting of the Catholic Film Society, held in the Millicent Fawcett Hall, Fr. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P. gave a running microphone commentary on *The Sacrifice of the Mass*. On Shrove Tuesday the Society gave a dance at which a film of the dancers was taken. The film will be shown at the April Display. The Society is now working on its 1936 programme, which includes a film of each of the Cathedrals of England.

COLNE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY, Sec.: T. Bank, 22, Granville Street, Colne.

The Society held the seventh performance of its second season on March 18th. The main feature presented was *Le Quatorze Juillet*, which was supported by *Shipyard*.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY, Sec.: Miss C. W. Harley, Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, N.W.3.

The last of the Season's performances was held on Saturday, 14th March, when Mr. Paul Rotha talked about the making of his film *Great Cargoes*. Other films shown included *Men behind the Meters*, *Grasshopper* and the *Ant*, *Children's News*, one of Miss Field's bird films, and *Mickey Mouse*.

Children have been invited to send in an account of the film they liked best, and the result of this competition will be announced. Visits to the projection room have been continued after each performance. Experience has proved that children much appreciate a good and varied interest programme, but further story and adventure films are much needed.

CINEMA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL, Sec.: T. H. Baxter, 59, New Oxford Street, W.C.1.

The proposals for the linking up of the C.C.C. with the Missionary Film Committee and the Religious Film Society are practically through, and in future the C.C.C. will act as the central advisory body, working through its two committees, the Missionary Film Committee and the Religious Film Committee. A joint Viewing Committee with the B.F.I. has been formed and has viewed several religious films. These reviews are published in the B.F.I. Bulletin. The scarcity of worth-while religious films is alarming, and the need for units to produce such films is urgent. This matter is receiving immediate attention. A conference is also being arranged for 22nd May at Lambeth Palace of representatives of those organisations interested in the moral and aesthetic standard of the cinema, to pool experience and to consult as to any possible concerted action for what may be called a "better films" campaign. A demonstration of religious films is being arranged from May 12th to 15th in the Kingsway Hall and other Halls.

FRIENDS' HALL AND WALTHAMSTOW SETTLEMENT FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: S. Birchby, Friends' Hall, Greenleaf Road, E.17.

The Society has had a very successful beginning and has enrolled over 320 members since last October. Monthly shows have been given since November, the following being among the films shown: *Kameradschaft*, *General Line*, *The Blue Light*, *Battleship Potemkin*. Arrangements are now being made for next season.

THE FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW, Hon. Sec.: D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

The Society has held five meetings during the season.

Among the films shown were *Der Kleine Schornsteinfeger*, *Kleine Dorrit*, *Remous*, *Shipyard*, *L'Atalante*.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, Sec.: E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

Among the films recently shown to members of the Society are *Episode*, *Housing Problems*, *Das Madchen Johanna*, *Coalface*. The lecture course by Mr. Leslie Cargill, Film Critic of the *Leicester Mercury*, on "How to Look at a Film" is now in progress. Among the films which have been used to illustrate the course so far are *Der Traumende Mund*, *I was a Spy*, *Blue Light*, *Murder*.

MAIDENHEAD FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: S. J. Clippingdale Watsham, 27, High Street, Maidenhead, Berks.

Among the films recently shown at the Society's meetings are *Paris-Mediterranee*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *The Pacific Problem*, *Young Things*, *Dinner Hour*.

MANCHESTER & SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, The Secretary, 86, Hulton Street, Salford, 5.

After a successful performance on Saturday, March 14th, when *Three Songs of Lenin* and other films were shown, the Society intends to recommence its regular monthly shows in September. The Society's position has improved, first as a result of an appeal to the members, and secondly by the recognition of the Society by the entertainments tax authorities as being partly educational and scientific in character.

MISSIONARY FILM COMMITTEE, Sec.: T. H. Baxter, 59, New Oxford Street, W.C.1.

The M.F.C. has carried through a number of showings of its films, especially *Beginning at Jerusalem* and *Through China and Japan*. The demand for the 16 mm. films produced by the M.F.C. continues, and reports are to hand of some most successful efforts with these. Preparations for a new India film are proceeding satisfactorily.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, N.16.

The Society has continued its monthly performances, the following being among the films presented: *Men and Jobs*, *Vampyr*, *Zero de Conduite*, *Deserter*, *Song of Ceylon*. In connection with *Men and Jobs*, a special meeting was arranged at which Marie Seton discussed "Recent Tendencies in Soviet Cinema." Lectures on different aspects of the film have been given by Andrew Buchanan, W. H. Auden, A. Cavalcanti, Basil Wright and Rudolf Arnheim.

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY, Gen. Sec.: Rev. S. W. Edwards, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

In connection with the Religious Film Society a Summer School is to be held at Digswell Park Conference House, Welwyn, Herts., from June 9th to 12th. The object of the course will be to survey all the uses to which films can be put in connection with churches and similar organisations. Discussions will be arranged, and there will be practical demonstrations of various types of film. This is the first venture of its kind, and full particulars can be obtained from the Rev. S. W. Edwards.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: c/o The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1.

The Tyneside Film Society has held four exhibitions during the Spring Session, at which the following films among others have been shown: *Jazz Comedy*, *Housing Problems*, *Shipyard*, *Unfinished Symphony*, *Zero de Conduite*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Face of Britain*, *Three Songs of Lenin*.

WOLVERHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secs.: Programme: E. L. Packer, 15, Merridale Road, Wolverhampton; Membership: P. W. Hyde, 78, Belmont Road, Wolverhampton.

Monthly meetings have been held by the Society at which the following among other films have been shown: *Der Traumende Mund*, *Joie de Vivre*, *Emperor Jones*, *Zero de Conduite*, *Key to Scotland*. Mr. Stanley Hawes, of Gaumont British Instructional Films Ltd., lectured to the Society on March 22nd on "The Production of Documentary Films."

TECHNICAL AND TRADE SECTION

THE LIGHTING OF SURGICAL FILMS

By Robert G. W. Ollerenshaw, B.A.

Mr. R. G. W. Ollerenshaw, who here describes the process of lighting surgical films, was responsible for the production of the first surgical film to be made in colour in this country. The film is a case record of the tendon-transplantation operation for Pes Cavus, and it is being successfully used to demonstrate this operation to medical students.

THE difficulties facing the producer of a surgical film fall into two main categories. Firstly, there are the purely technical problems of how much and what type of light he is to employ; secondly, and by no means less important, is the question of the design of his plant so as to fulfil the first series of requirements without incommoding the surgeon or endangering the patient.

The second problem is one which can only be solved with reference to the conditions prevailing in the particular operating theatre to be used. In general, it may be said that the plant must be of sufficient power to allow of the individual units being kept at least eight feet from the field of operation. Where a bridge-type of mount is employed, it will generally be found that it can be placed over the anaesthetist, and in this case the units may be closer to the field.

We have found that the best results, when using colour-film, (and this, we are convinced, will become in time the accepted

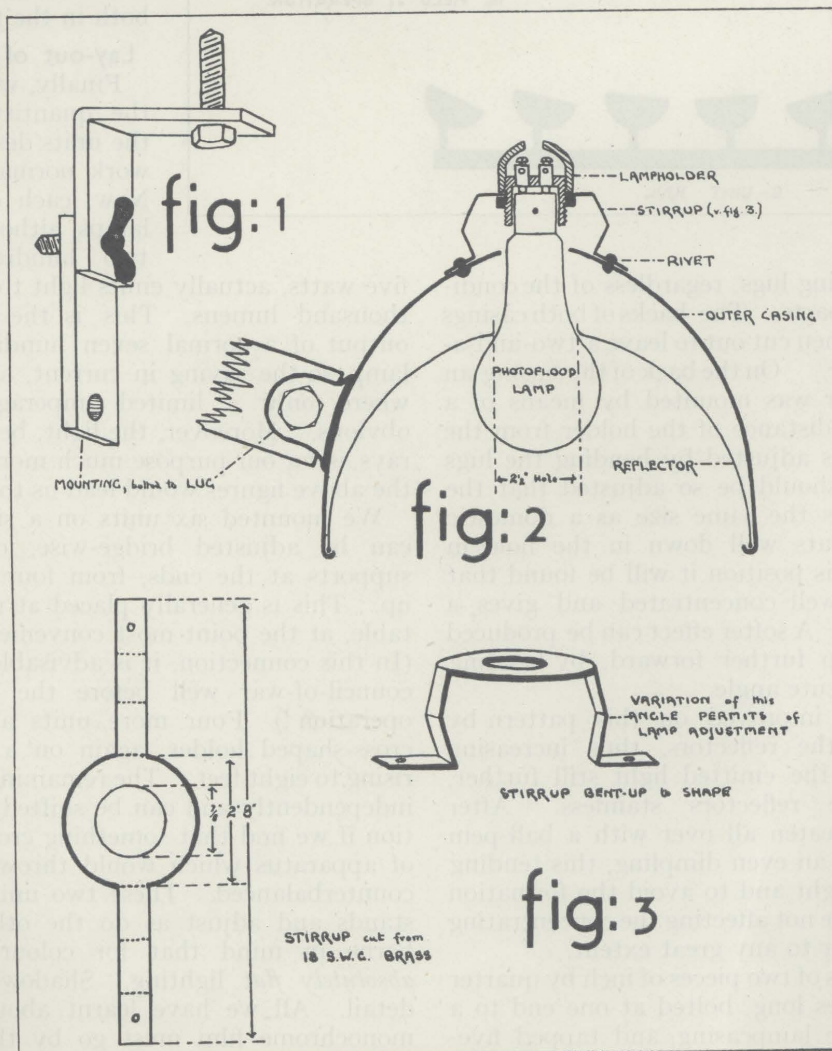
medium for surgical work) are obtained by using lamps of the overloaded half-watt type, of which the "Photoflood" is the best example. These lamps have a greater blue-content than the ordinary incandescent lamp, and permit of the use of Spicer-Dufay stock without any filter. This, when the power of the plant is to be kept down, is a decided advantage.

The lamp-unit

Now, as regards the type of lamp-unit. We have tried a great many, and for some time employed a kind of "broadside" unit consisting of a shallow box about eighteen inches square, with sloping sides, rather like a giant pie-dish. This, with four lamps, was a powerful and fairly mobile unit, when fixed on a gimbal-type mount. But it had the disadvantage that there was no means of

concentrating the light. "Spots" of the conventional type are out of the question for overloaded lamps, as these generate a considerable heat, and can thus only be used in open fronted mounts, unless a forced draught is provided. This would be too complex to use in the theatre.

We have since developed what we consider to be the ideal unit for this kind of work, as it is small, easily cleaned, mobile, capable of concentrating the light, and, finally, very cheap to produce. We bought a quantity of old headlamps from a car-breaker, choosing those with good



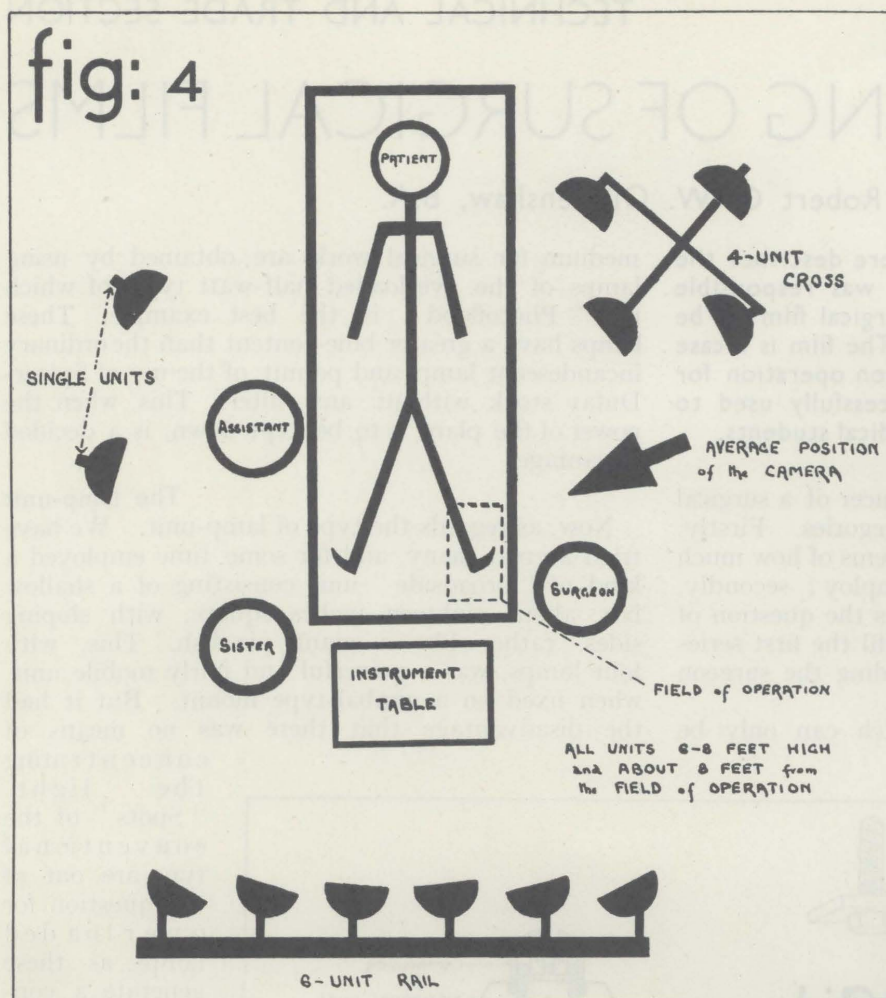


Fig. 4, showing layout of theatre

sixteenths at the other. The second is L-shaped about three inches each limb, drilled to clear five-sixteenths at one end, and fixed there to the first piece with a thumb-screw. At the other end it is drilled to clear a half-inch bolt, by which it is fixed, with a wing-nut, to whatever mount is in use. This simple arrangement gives a full range of movement, and complete rigidity in any position. The construction will be made clear from Fig. 1. Fig. 2 shows the lamp-unit in section, and Fig. 3, the stirrup, both in the flat and bent up.

Lay-out of operating theatre

Finally, we must deal with the quantity and lay-out of the units described above. We work normally with a dozen. Now, each of the overloaded lamps, although rated at only two hundred and seventy-

reflectors and mounting lugs, regardless of the condition of the electrical parts. The backs of both casings and reflectors were then cut out to leave a two-and-a-half inch circular hole. On the back of the casing an ordinary lampholder was mounted by means of a brass stirrup. The distance of the holder from the back of the casing is adjusted by bending the lugs of the stirrup. It should be so adjusted that the Photoflood, which is the same size as a domestic sixty-watt lamp, seats well down in the hole in the reflector. In this position it will be found that the beam is fairly well concentrated and gives a definite "hot spot." A softer effect can be produced by setting the lamp further forward, by bending the lugs to a more acute angle.

Subsequently we improved on this pattern by chromium plating the reflectors, thus increasing the blue-content of the emitted light still further, and rendering the reflectors stainless. After plating they were beaten all over with a ball-pein hammer, to produce an even dimpling, this tending to smooth out the light and to avoid the formation of a lamp image, while not affecting the concentrating power of the reflector to any great extent.

The mount consists of two pieces of inch by quarter iron, one three inches long, bolted at one end to a mounting lug on the lampcasing, and tapped five-

five watts, actually emits light to the value of nine thousand lumens. This is the equivalent of the output of a normal seven hundred and fifty watt lamp, so the saving in current, an important thing where only a limited amperage is available, is obvious. Moreover, the light, being strong in blue rays, is for our purpose much more useful than even the above figures would lead us to expect.

We mounted six units on a six-foot rail, which can be adjusted bridge-wise, on two telescopic supports at the ends, from four feet to eight feet up. This is generally placed at right-angles to the table, at the point most convenient to the surgeon. (In this connection, it is advisable to hold a sort of council-of-war well before the time set for the operation!) Four more units are mounted on a cross-shaped holder, again on a telescopic mount rising to eight feet. The remaining two are mounted independently and can be shifted during the operation if we find that something crops up, say a piece of apparatus which would throw a shadow unless counterbalanced. These two units are on wheeled stands and adjust as do the others. It must be borne in mind that for colour work we want *absolutely flat* lighting. Shadows simply obscure detail. All we have learnt about the lighting of monochrome film must go by the board. Fig. 4

shows a fairly typical arrangement, which was actually used for making part of the film *Pes Cavus*. (B.F.I. Monthly Film Bulletin. Vol. 2—No. 22.)

The units should be kept at an average distance of eight feet from the field, and the "hot spot" of each unit should be lined up so as to hit the actual field of operation.

Except when direct sunlight shines through, the ordinary window light of the average theatre may be disregarded in the making of colour-film, as it is rarely strong enough in comparison with the artificial lighting plant to affect the final result. We recommend that colour work be avoided on very sunny days, as the natural light is such a variable factor that it leads to inconsistent results, and these are fatal to a well-matched film, particularly as very few surgical teaching films can be completed at a single session. It will usually be necessary, if adequate detail is to be shown, and the camera-angles varied, to photograph at least two operations, and build them into one on the cutting table.

With the lighting arrangement shown in Fig. 4, successful exposures were obtained at an aperture of $f/2.8$. If a slower lens is used the quantity of

light should be increased proportionately. The units should *not* be moved *closer*, as this will entail a risk of burning the patient and interfering with the freedom of movement of the surgeon.

Finally, a brief remark as to the unfortunate habit of overloaded lamps of burning out at the wrong moment. The failure of one out of the dozen is not very serious, but we find it a good thing to rig a couple of spares, which can be cut in should one of the regular units fail. The life of the lamps can be much prolonged if a heavy-duty resistance is wired in series with the whole outfit. They can then be run at low intensity except when actually shooting, and can be gradually warmed up instead of being switched on to full load directly. If this precaution is taken the lamps will have a satisfactorily long life.

An additional point, not strictly connected with lighting, but definitely affecting the results, is that the ordinary white towels of the theatre produce a most objectionable halation effect. This we avoid by using black towels, which not only produce no halation, but also show up the instruments in a much more efficient manner.

TECHNICAL NOTES

British Kinematograph Society's Lectures

I.—On February 17th, Mr. S. R. Eade gave a paper on "The Mechanical Design of Film Driving Mechanisms." He began by pointing out that in the early days of cinematography the problem had been to perfect means of imparting intermittent motion to the film. Since the coming of sound the problem has been to impart continuous even motion to the film. For the investigation of irregular film-travel by the stroboscopic method the B.T.H. Co. has developed a mercury vapour lamp emitting flashes of considerable luminosity, each lasting about one ten-millionth of a second. High precision methods are required as for good sound-reproduction accuracy within one ten-thousandth of an inch is desirable. In fact, in the discussion which followed, the opinion was expressed that for television picture-scanning (which, of course, is also continuous) this limit of accuracy was an absolute minimum. Mr. Eade set forth a method of evaluating the mechanical characteristics necessary for a film-driving mechanism in any given set of conditions by making use of the analogy of an electrical circuit.

II.—On March 2nd, Mr. Anson Dyer spoke on "Cartoon Production." He began by showing some early cartoon work in which the artist's hand was visible executing the drawing. In fact, at this stage the whole affair was simply a photographic version of the well-known entertainment turn—lightning draughtsmanship. A little sophistication was introduced later when the hand was withdrawn during photography and the drawing appeared to complete itself by magic. That the completed drawing should "come alive" was a still later development.

Coming to his recent productions, Mr. Dyer showed a "Carmen" operatic burlesque and two "Sam's Musket" cartoons, which were enthusiastically received. He explained that the musical sound-track was prepared first. The conductor's foot controlled a pedal which flashed a light on the beats, and this light was recorded on the film and gave a key for the timing of the action in the drawings. When the speech track was being recorded a film of the speaker's mouth was similarly used.

Several members of the audience afterwards expressed the opinion that the comparatively slow tempo of action in

Mr. Dyer's cartoons came as a relief after the eye-straining speed of some American cartoons.

Improved Sound Recording

In a paper recently read before the Society of Motion Picture Engineers in New York an account was given of what may turn out to be an important improvement in sound-recording method. It has been developed by the R.C.A. On the recording side of sound-film work the main bar to progress lies, of course, in the imperfection of the photographic image as a delineator of the very minute detail required for the rendering of sound waves of high frequency. It has to be borne in mind that even sounds whose fundamental waves are of low frequency require the preservation of any high frequency harmonies which may be present in order to produce a natural effect. Satisfactory sound demands far more detail from the photographic image than satisfactory picture-effect. Two important causes of photographic imperfection are chromatic aberration, *i.e.*, the inability of any lens to bring waves of different lengths to a single focus and "scatter" the tendency of the waves to penetrate the emulsion and reflect back inside it. These troubles are minimised in the new R.C.A. system by using a short spectrum band only, situated in the ultra-violet region. A filter is used to eliminate the rest of the spectrum. The absence of wide variations in the wavelengths of the light used increases the efficiency of the recording optical system, while the small penetrating power of long wave-lengths tends to diminish scatter. Granted adequate refinement in the theatre sound-reproducing installations these improvements should lead to truer music and more realistic speech.

Film Storage

The Film Institute has received a copy of recommendations made by the Eastman Kodak Co., N.Y., to the National Archives, Washington, for the storage of films of historical value. The methods recommended correspond very closely with the report of the British Kinematograph Society's Committee (British Film Institute Leaflet 4). The subject will be dealt with at greater length in the summer number of *SIGHT AND SOUND*.

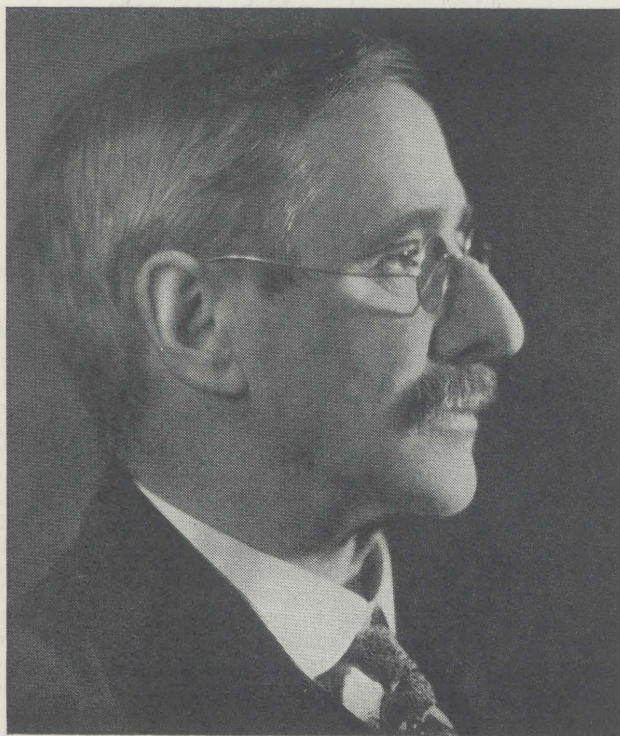
LOOKING BACK

Reminiscences kindly communicated to SIGHT AND SOUND

by Mr. W. Vinten and Mr. A. S. Newman

The rapid technical advance of cinematography tends to make its early history seem to the present-day reader something indefinitely remote. In point of fact many of those who were old enough at that time to take an active part in pioneering are still young enough to be taking an equally active part in the industry as it exists to-day. Mr. Vinten and Mr. Newman are among such pioneers.

MR. A. S. NEWMAN



AFTER four rather wasted years of clerking I became apprenticed to a microscope manufacturer at the age of 17. At that time the £5 microscope was taken up by hundreds of enthusiastic amateurs, whose leisure was not yet occupied by golf and motoring. Numerous microscope clubs flourished. The microscope craze was the legitimate successor of the mechanics craze which consisted in owning a lathe and turning out "decorative" objects in ivory and blackwood.

Whilst I was in the microscope trade the Edison-Bell Telephone and the Hughes Microphone were invented. I at once became interested in electrical matters and constructed a telephone and microphone. The favourite demonstration of their possibilities was to make the sound of a fly walking audible

at a distance of 30 yards. At 21 I decided to follow my bent towards electricity and joined H. and E. J. Dale who were, among other things, engaged on fitting up electric bells—at that time regarded as somewhat of a novelty.

Designing a Camera Shutter

While I was there Dale started trying to make photographic plates. This diverted my attention to camera design. The devising of an improved shutter was at that time much needed. The oldest type of shutter was worked by gravity, and fell across the lens like a portcullis. This naturally failed to yield wide variations of speed. Its successor was the elastic band shutter, speeded according to the tension of the band. Unfortunately the bands were not of high quality material, and as soon as the user was accustomed to the working of an individual band it broke. Being accustomed to fine mechanics I came to the conclusion that a measured shutter was required. It may be hard now to imagine that there was anything original in such a decision, but at the time amateurs had strange ideas about shutters, one school of thought attributing magic virtues to any shutter which made a loud bang when it worked. My ideas, however, ran in the direction of a shutter moved by a steel spring, and checked by an air dashpot. For my experiments I needed an instrument capable of measuring small intervals of time, and I constructed a simple, but effective, one. It consisted of a glass plate running along a horizontal groove, driven by a weight and checked by a liquid dashpot. One side of this plate was smoked and a tracing arm actuated by a pendulum marked off sinusoidal curves on this when the horizontal movement of the plate and the vertical movement of the tracing arm were combined. The duration of each pendulum swing being a known factor, these curves could be read off in fractions of a second. In order to time the shutter mechanism it was fixed up so that its movement traced a curve on the smoked side of the sliding glass simultaneously with the pendulum tracing arm. A comparison of the two sets of curves gave all necessary data.

While working on the shutter I did not entirely give up electrical work, and designed a timing device for the Cresta toboggan run at St. Moritz (which was successful) and worked on a telegraphic instrument, the "Phonopore," designed by Langdon Davies, to enable a single wire to carry ordinary signals and signals impressed on high frequency waves simultaneously without mutual interference. When I had worked out my shutter I tried to dispose of it to photographic firms interested in such matters, but without result. At last a M. Gilmer, traveller for the Paris firm of Laverne et Cie, saw its utility, and for three years this English invention was exploited under the name of a French firm.

In this way, however, I got started in business on my own. I did much work for Adams & Co., and developed their first camera, the "Ideal." In 1879 I joined Julio Guardia as "Newman and Guardia," and developed the "Nydia" folding cameras, the "Celeritas" shutter (the first to give 1/500th of a second with certainty), and the N.G. "Special B" box cameras. Two of these latter turned up at a recent photographic convention, still in use after 40 years.

Beginning of cinematography

My ideal in designing has always been simplicity, a quality which gives any mechanism the best chance of standing up to prolonged wear. Guardia was one of the first to realise that a hand camera could be more than a toy. So revolutionary was this idea at that time that it brought a good deal of ridicule on him. He was, however, too conservative to join in my enthusiasm when I came back, one day in 1896, from seeing an exhibition of Lumière's films at the Empire, and told him that I intended to devote myself to improving this new instrument, the cinematograph. I told him that I believed it to be the greatest invention since the printing press, and even went so far as to predict that it would have a considerable commercial future. Guardia, however, put it down as a nine-days' wonder and a scientific toy. Nevertheless, I started experiments on my own, developed a few small machines (some of which are now in the Victoria and Albert Science Museum) and gave shows. At that date perforation was a great difficulty, and I devised a step-by-step perforator with an adjustable pilot-pin, so that the gauge could be set. This received a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, and I manufactured a good many for Charles Urban and other users. The greater speed of the perforating machine which Bell Howell afterwards introduced ultimately put mine out of business.

The kinematograph cameras which I have designed have always been of a light type, suitable for work of scientific men and explorers. The Shackleton, Scott and Everest expeditions all made use of them. One was also used in *Man of Aran* by Flaherty. In fact, these cameras, which run 200 feet of film at one wind, have occupied much of my attention for some years. And I am still working to improve them.

MR. W. VINTEN



MY interest in cinematography was first aroused in 1896 when I happened to see one of Mr. R. W. Paul's displays at the Alhambra. From that moment I was desirous of getting into the manufacturing side of the business, but did not succeed in doing so until 1901 when I joined Newman and Guardia as a tool-maker. My work began upon press tools for Nydia and Sybil still cameras but soon developed into work upon cinema projectors, cameras and perforators. Two special jobs remain in my memory—developing an oil dash-pot to absorb the shock of a spring-driven claw motion, and reciprocating brushes which cleared away the dust under the punches of a perforator. When Mr. Paul moved his works to New Southgate, I joined him there and thus for the first time became acquainted with the producing and darkroom side of the business. My first job there was connected with the "Animatograph," a projector with a three-armed cross; my last job was installing an 80 h.p. gas engine and gas producer plant. Contact with Mr. Newman and Mr. Paul has led to a life-long friendship. Next I started as a master man, making machinery for the Charles Urban Trading Co.—printing machines and dies and punches for the Urban-Joy perforator. This was about 1906 when the Kinematograph Manufacturers' Association under the chairmanship of Mr. Will Barker was being formed to tackle the problems of standardisation, which have intrigued me ever since.

Urbanora House

Soon after this, Charles Urban embarked on the erection of "Urbanora House" in Wardour Street and included a machine-shop in his plans. I was offered and accepted the managership of this machine shop, giving up my little workshop to do so, and undertook planning its lay-out and purchasing

its machinery—for which the modest sum of £1,000 was allowed.

The first order was for 50 "Bioscopes" (a projector with an intermittent of the 'dog' type) and my efforts chiefly aimed at getting more silent running by the use of spiral gears. It has to be remembered that at this date most of our customers were travelling showmen, without much mechanical skill or capital, and low price combined with attractive finish were our chief considerations, accuracy taking a second place. When we subsequently tried to develop the "Silent Knight"—a 4-armed maltese-cross machine—it was not very successful because it called for higher accuracy in manufacture and greater skill in operation. Nevertheless this projector had features which link it with the modern machine. Its cross ran in an oil-bath and both cross and striking-pin were hardened and ground.

Kinemacolor process

In 1908 we became busy helping to develop apparatus for the "Kinemacolor" process, in co-operation with Mr. Henry Joy. This process was a 2-colour additive process requiring the projection of 35 to 40 pictures a second. For such speed the projectors had to be very heavily constructed and were equipped with special dog-movements incorporating a double roller. They were very successful, and we made no less than 150 of them. We also manufactured a number of special cameras for the process. The subjects taken were almost all topical. Among the first was the Carnival and Battle of Flowers at Nice. The camera equipment included a number of removable masks for special effects, and it was possible to put these on wrong way round. This actually happened at Nice and the pictures turned out to be only half on the film. Fortunately I was able to put the blame for this on to Mr. Mackenzie, one of the pioneer cameramen. Later on Mr. Mackenzie travelled right across Canada and took many views of forest scenery

through the window of the train while in motion. These pictures produced a fine stereoscopic effect, as indeed always occurs when the camera moves across the field of view and the field of view contains a number of upstanding objects. This effect made such an impression on the inventors of the time that there was an immediate rush to patent peculiar tripod-heads designed to reproduce the illusion. Unfortunately these efforts met with no success.

The most popular "Kinemacolor" film was that of the Delhi Durbar. Charles Urban, who was both a clever showman and a sound business man, made a great ceremony of the opening of the Scala theatre with Kinemacolor. Hermann Finck composed special music for the occasion and conducted the orchestra himself. Unfortunately, Urban became involved in patent litigation with the "Biocolor" Company and lost his appeal in the House of Lords. The rival company were never, in fact, able to make use of their legal success. Mr. Urban resigned his position, and I purchased the machine-shop with the idea of doing there whatever work I could for Kinemacolor. I thus got back again to having my own business.

Some odd jobs

In addition to ordinary cinematographic work a variety of odd jobs came my way. Thus I recall developing for a friend in the industry a machine for dealing playing cards. It was called "The Square Dealer," and cynics may regard the supposed need for it as a proof that there were sharpers in the industry even at that date! I also remember overhauling a 4-barrelled Hotchkiss gun used in a strong-man turn on the Music Halls. The gun was fired by an assistant on a platform and the platform was supported on the chin of the strong man.

Soon after this came the War and the works were taken over for the manufacture of observation cameras and for research work of various sorts. But the War seems a convenient date to choose for the winding up of these reminiscences.

NEW APPARATUS

THE SIEMENS COMBINED 9.5 AND 16mm. PROJECTOR

Cinepro, Ltd., 1, New Burlington Street, London, W.1

The problem of producing a machine of this type lies, of course, in the designing of the intermittent movement. The method hitherto adopted has been to recess a central claw inside the gate and provide alternative gate-runners, so that the 9.5 mm. film is engaged by this claw and runs clear of the 16 mm. claws, while the converse takes place with the 16 mm. film.

The Siemens beater movement has proved capable of a rather simpler method of adaptation.

By simply scooping out the centre of the fibre block which beats down the film the designer has, very ingeniously, made a movement which will feed down the appropriate length of film in either case. It is necessary, of course, to change the top and bottom sprockets and gate-mask. In general characteristics the machine is identical with the well-known "Standard" model.

Its price is £59 10s.

WESTERN ELECTRIC COMPANY'S ROAD SHOW SERVICE,

Western Electric Company, Ltd., Bush House, Aldwych, W.C.2.

We are asked by the Western Electric Company to announce that as from the autumn of this year it is proposed to add the 16 mm. sound-on-film reproducer which the company has been developing to the equipment of its Road Show Service.

The Company feels that the Road Show Service has undoubtedly met a need since a large number of firms, educational bodies and other groups have taken advantage of the facilities offered by this organisation, through which all the arrangements for exhibitions of sound films are carried out on an inclusive hiring basis—equipment, transport facilities, trained operating staff and film library service, all being provided from local depots.

S. P. EQUIPMENTS, LTD., 9, Golden Square, London, W.1.

We desire to draw attention to the name and address of S.P. Equipments, Ltd., as given herewith, and to apologise for the error in recording this information which was made in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND.

For Sale Cheap !

A COMPLETE
"BRITISH
ACOUSTIC"
SOUND FILM
EQUIPMENT

Mechanically Perfect,
Excellent reproduction,
Ideal Equipment for
Medium or Small Hall.

At present operating
near London. Can be
seen and heard by
appointment.

OWNERS ARE PREPARED
TO SELL AT SACRIFICE
PRICE FOR QUICK
DISPOSAL

Full Particulars :

Write BOX 62
REDHEADS ADVERTISING
LIMITED
20 SAVILLE ROW
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, 1

Sub-standard
in size — but

ILFORD
quality !

TWO FILMS WHICH
ARE PERFECT FOR
EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES



16mm.
Safety
CINE FILM
NEGATIVE-POSITIVE

Selo 16mm. Negative-Positive Cine Film is the ideal film for the educationalist—it gives the 16 mm. worker all the advantages of professional practice and quality—and has the great advantage that any number of positive prints can be made from the original negative—which is always available for further reprints when required.

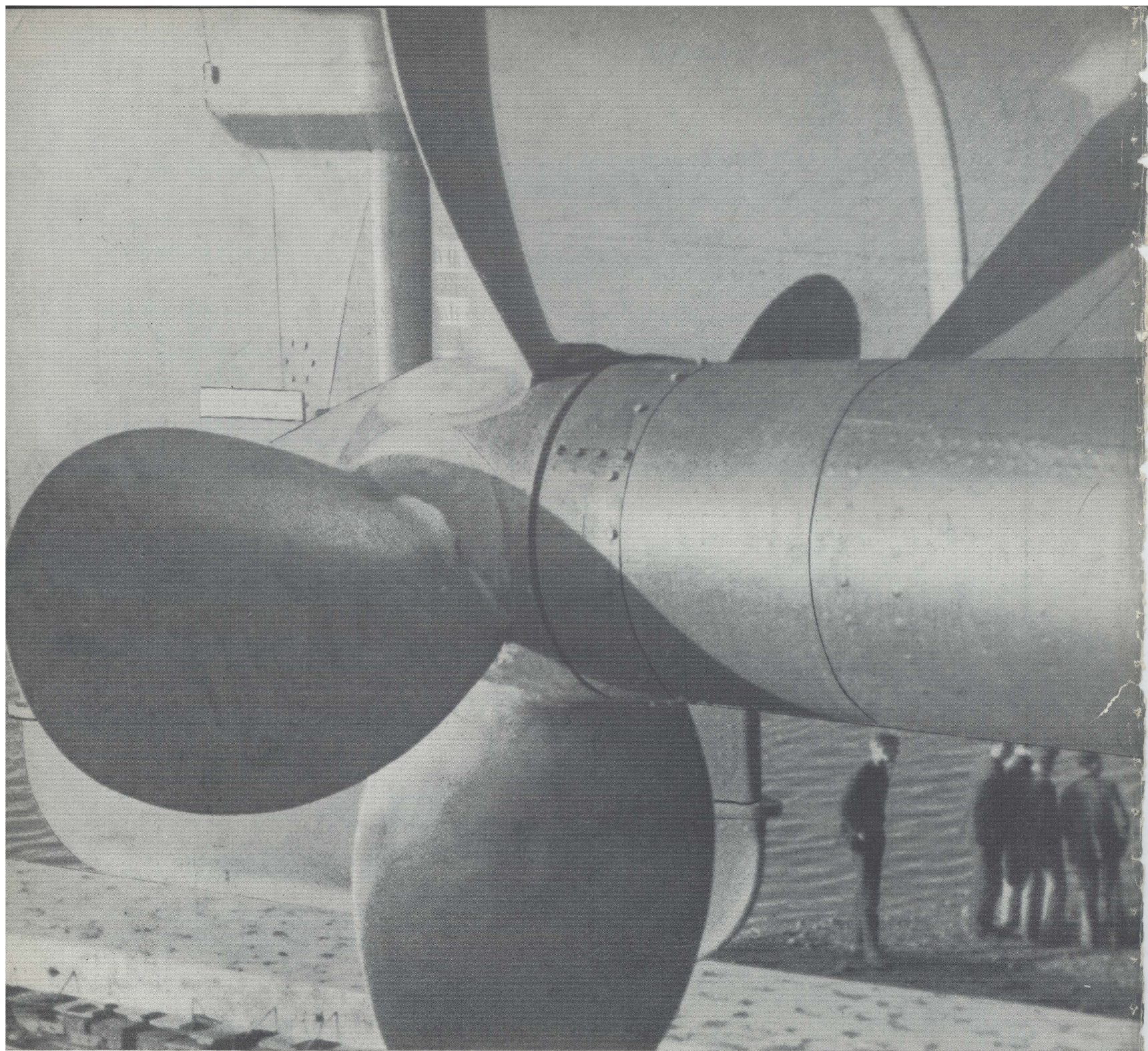
Selo 16 mm. negative film is double coated—and possesses great latitude and anti-halation properties. It is of extreme speed and is available in orthochromatic and panchromatic emulsions.



16mm. Safety
REVERSAL
CINE FILM
Fine Grain

Selo 16 mm. Safety Reversal Fine Grain Cine Film is another film which is of tremendous value for instructional purposes. Fast, "plucky" and having great latitude, it gives sharply defined pictures which project to large screen sizes. With the aid of this fine film perfect pictures can be taken in late evening, under adverse weather conditions or by artificial light.

Made in England by
ILFORD LIMITED ILFORD LONDON



A Scene from the G.B.I. documentary "SHIPYARD."

G.B. INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS

*interpret today for the men
and women of tomorrow*

Write or telephone for the new Spring List.

G.B. INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS BUREAU • FILM HOUSE • WARDOUR ST • LONDON • W.1

TELEPHONE : GERRARD 9292